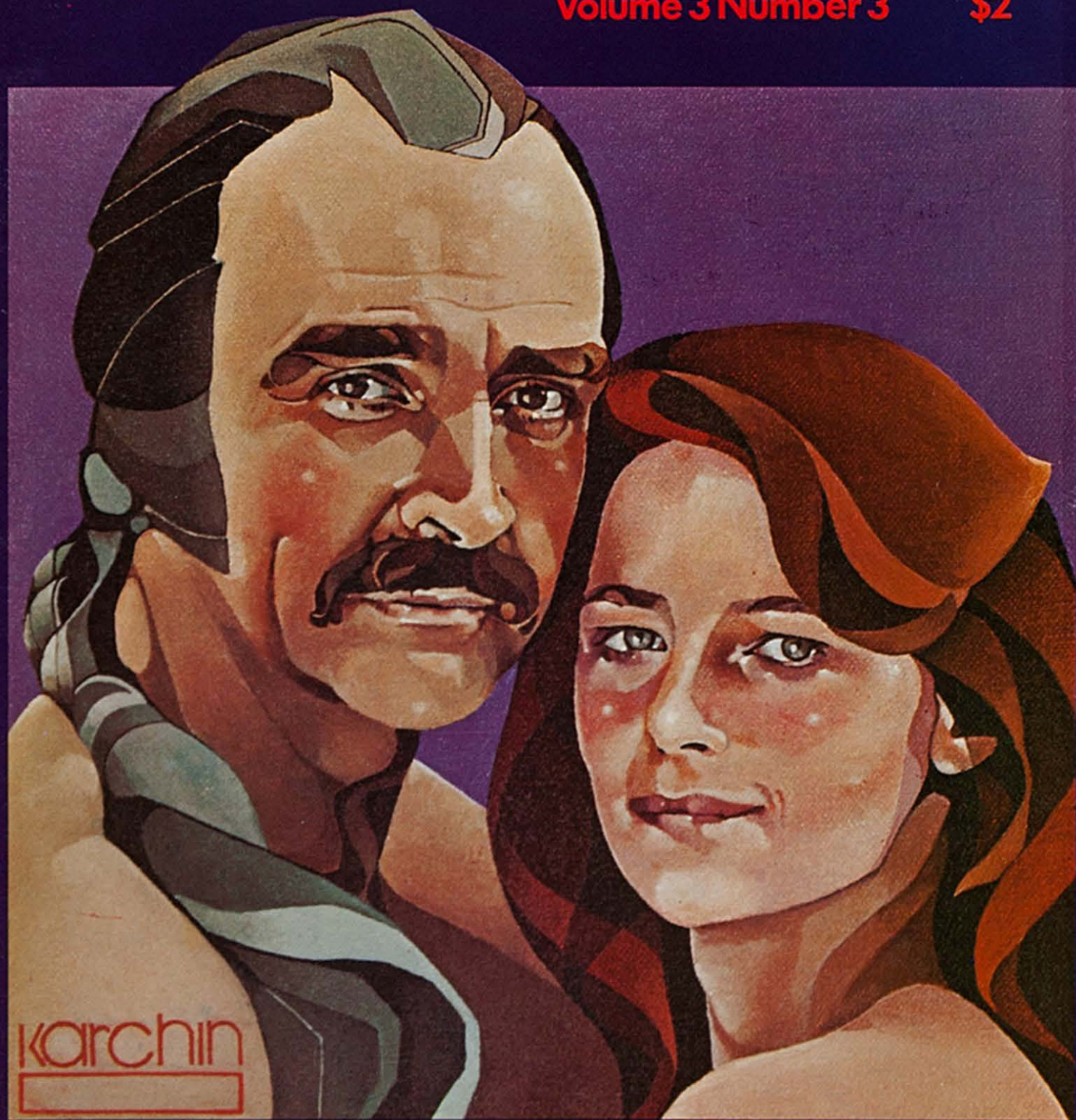


# CINEFANTASTIQUE

Volume 3 Number 3 \$2



**ZARDOZ**





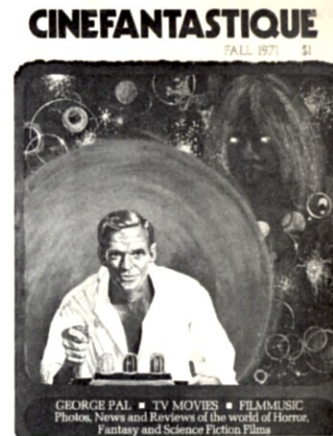
Volume 1 Number 1



Volume 1 Number 2



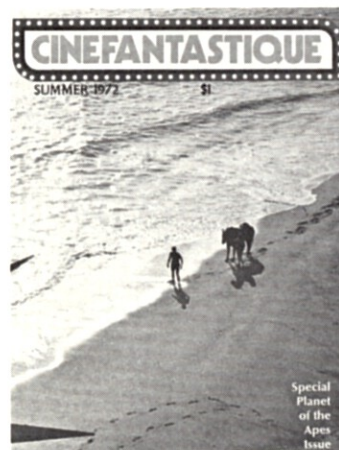
Volume 1 Number 3



Volume 1 Number 4



Volume 2 Number 1



Volume 2 Number 2



Volume 2 Number 3



Volume 2 Number 4



Volume 3 Number 1



Volume 3 Number 2



Volume 3 Number 3

Support the world's only review of horror, fantasy and science fiction films and save money at the same time by taking advantage of our economical subscription rates. You can order those back issues you missed at the same time. All magazines are mailed in heavy duty manila envelopes to arrive in perfect condition and subscribers receive special bulletins not available with newstand copies. We have in preparation a Special Issue devoted to THE EXORCIST, including interviews with William Friedkin, William Peter Blatty, makeup artist Dick Smith and others, the definitive coverage of a landmark film in the genre with many never-before-published photographs.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

CINEFANTASTIQUE  
Post Office Box 270  
Oak Park, Illinois 60303

## BACK ISSUES

( ) One Year \$8 .....  
four issues Name

( ) Two Years \$15 .....  
eight issues Address

( ) Three Years \$20 .....  
twelve issues City State Zip Code

Vol 1 No 1: \$5@ ( )  
Vol 1 No 2: \$5@ ( )  
Vol 1 No 3: \$5@ ( )  
Vol 1 No 4: \$3@ ( )  
Vol 2 No 1: \$3@ ( )  
Vol 2 No 2: \$3@ ( )  
Vol 2 No 3: \$3@ ( )  
Vol 2 No 4: \$3@ ( )  
Vol 3 No 1: \$5@ ( )  
Vol 3 No 2: \$3@ ( )  
Vol 3 No 3: \$3@ ( )



# FALL

# FEATURES

PUBLISHER & EDITOR  
Frederick S. Clarke

## CORRESPONDENTS

David Bartholomew (New York)  
Robert L. Jerome (Miami)  
Stuart M. Kaminsky (Chicago)  
Chris Knight (London)  
Tim Lucas (Cincinnati)  
Mick Martin (San Francisco)  
Jean-Claude Morlot (Paris)  
Dan R. Scapperotti (New York)  
Dale Winogura (Hollywood)

## CONTRIBUTORS

Christopher Baffer  
William Crouch  
Charles Derry  
Reynold Humphries  
Frank Jackson  
Dennis S. Johnson  
John McCarty  
Harry Ringel  
Bhob Stewart

**AWKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** Aldrich Associates (Robert Aldrich), American Film Theatre, Brynston Pictures, CineGlobe, Columbia Pictures, Dimension Pictures, Film Images, Hallmark Releasing, MGM, New World Pictures, Paramount (Randi Werbsht), Michael R. Pitts, Mark Rappaport, 20th Century-Fox (John Campbell), Universal Pictures, Warner Bros (Mort Lickter, Bill Stern).

**CINEFANTASTIQUE** is published quarterly at P. O. Box 270, Oak Park, Illinois 60303. Single copies when purchased from the publisher are \$3. Subscriptions: one year (4 issues) \$8, two years (8 issues) \$15, three years (12 issues) \$20. Foreign subscriptions (including Canada and Mexico): one year \$12, two years \$20, three years \$30, payable by International Postal Money Order or a check drawn in U. S. funds on any American bank. Contributions of art, articles, photos and reviews are heartily encouraged but not paid for. On substantial projects, a discussion in advance will often save wasted time and effort. Contributors receive a minimum of three copies of the issue containing their work, on publication. Display advertising rates and specifications are available on request. For classified advertising rates and information see page 47. No correspondence will be answered unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Application to mail at second class postage rates is pending at Oak Park, Illinois. Printed in U. S. A. Contents are copyright © 1974 by Frederick S. Clarke.

**RETAIL DISTRIBUTION:** In the United States and Canada by B. DeBoer, 188 High Street, Nutley, New Jersey 07110. Other countries please apply to the publisher for our liberal discount and terms of sale.

## THE HORROR OF PERSONALITY

Charles Derry defines and examines a sub-genre of the horror film that has developed only in fairly recent times and shows how it sprang from the horror film mainstream as a response to historical events and society's growing concern with senseless violence. Derry points out that the world of Norman Bates and Baby Jane has a sad, chilling and somewhat poignant message for us all.

by Charles Derry 14

## ALDRICH: The Horror of Personality Directors

Robert Aldrich discusses WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE? and HUSH... HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE.

interview by Charles Derry 19

## CASTLE: The Horror of Personality Directors

William Castle discusses HOMICIDAL and STRAIGHT-JACKET and his fifties horror films.

interview by Dan R. Scapperotti 20

## HARRINGTON: The Horror of Personality Directors

Curtis Harrington discusses GAMES, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN? and WHO SLEW AUNTIE ROO?

interview by Dale Winogura 21

## FRIEDKIN: ON THE EXORCIST

William Friedkin discusses the film that will shape the future of genre filmmaking in its approach to horror, and reveals the psychology of fear he used to arouse movie audiences as never before. While Friedkin finds himself reluctant to admit having made a horror film, he provides an interesting insight into a film that can be interpreted on many levels.

interview by William Crouch 6

# REVIEWS

## ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN

by John McCarty 32

## DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT

by Frank Jackson 32

## DON'T LOOK NOW

by Harry Ringel 30

## FANTASTIC PLANET

by David Bartholomew 31

## LOST HORIZON

by Robert L. Jerome 31

## SOME CALL IT LOVING

by David Bartholomew 42

## WESTWORLD

by Reynold Humphries 33

## ZARDOZ

by Frank Jackson 28

# NEWS & NOTES

## DOC SAVAGE: THE MAN OF BRONZE

Producer George Pal discusses his latest fantasy film, a recreation of a legendary hero from the pulp magazines of the '30s and '40s, that may show a resurgence of public interest in simple, escapist fantasy.

interview by Dennis S. Johnson and Dale Winogura 4

## SLEEPING BEAUTY IS A WHORE!

Director James B. Harris discusses his new film SOME CALL IT LOVING, a morbidly kinky modernization of the classic fairy tale that has all but disappeared from release due to bad reviews, bad boxoffice and bad luck.

interview by David Bartholomew 40

## CLASSIFIED ADS

good things for you to buy 47

## COMING

some interesting film projects we find on the horizon 46

## FILM RATINGS

the staff gets together to disagree about the films they like 36

## LETTERS

readers tell us where we went wrong 47

## SENSE OF WONDER

editorial remarks by Frederick S. Clarke 39

## SHORT NOTICES

capsule comments on current releases 34

## Front Cover: Painting by Steve Karchin of Sean Connery and Charlotte Rampling from ZARDOZ

Two fantastic scenes from FANTASTIC PLANET, in release from New World Pictures :Back Cover

# VOLUME 3

# NUMBER 3



# DOC SAVAGE

## THE MAN OF BRONZE

Producer George Pal discusses his latest fantasy film, full of the wonder, excitement and imagination that have made his name a byword in the genre.

At 68, George Pal is the dean of science fiction film producers. His fourteenth feature film in a long career spanning forty years in the industry is **DOC SAVAGE: THE MAN OF BRONZE**, soon to be released by Warner Bros. A subject in keeping with Pal's fantastic film career, Doc Savage is one of the great superheroes created for the pulp magazines of the '30s and '40s by the late Kenneth Robeson. Accompanied by his band of followers—The Amazing Five—Doc Savage battled the forces of both supernatural evil and the menace of science gone awry in the pages of *Doc Savage Magazine*, a perennial favorite of depression and war-weary readers. Today, amid the mire of Watergate politics, urban guerilla warfare, and an economy spiraling toward a ruinous inflationary collapse, people are again looking for escape in the uncomplicated world of fantasy as represented by Doc Savage. Doc Savage: a man of superhuman strength and protean genius whose giant body has been killed by tropical suns and arctic winds to a permanent bronze. In this interview, George Pal tells us how and why he has brought back this legendary character to save the American sanity, and discusses the production of the Warner Bros film which is directed by Michael Anderson starring Ron Ely in the title role.

**CFQ:** What audience are you trying to reach with **DOC SAVAGE**?

**PAL:** In the last six years the Doc Savage Bantam books, the reprints alone, have sold 11,400,000 copies. It's an awful lot of copies! Somebody buys them. I figure my audience are the people who read those books, plus I think we can create enough excitement about Doc Savage to attract the people who don't know about him. I'm sure we can get most of the kids, most of the science fiction fans, and most of the nostalgia buffs who remember Doc Savage.

I have the motion picture and television rights to 181 Doc Savage stories, all about Doc and his amazing crew of five, Monk, the world's greatest chemist, Ham, the legal brain, Long Tom,

Interview conducted by Dennis S. Johnson and Frederick S. Clarke, November 1972. Portions conducted by Dale Wignogura in Hollywood, May 1974.

the electrical wizard, Renny, the engineer, and Johnny, an expert on archeology and geology. Monk and Ham are kind of like Abbott and Costello, because Monk is a 5 x 5, while Ham is a very spidery, long-legged, impeccably dressed Bostonian lawyer. They're always having arguments between themselves. Monk has a little pet pig and because of his arguments with Ham, the legal brain, Monk calls his pig Habeus Corpus. It's funny. So, we have lots of fun with **DOC SAVAGE**.

**CFQ:** You worked very long and hard in getting your first Doc Savage adventure on the screen. Had you ever considered doing television first?

**PAL:** If I went straight into television today with Doc Savage I could make an average deal, maybe even a good deal, for a series, but not as good a deal as say the producer of **PLANET OF THE APES** could do today, after that series of feature films, or the producer of James Bond for a series based on that. I'm sure we're going to make several Doc Savage pictures. After the first one is successful, we'll make another one, and then we'll sell the series to television. By that time, every network will fight for it. At least, that's my conviction.

**CFQ:** 181 Doc Savage books seems

like a fantastic amount of material to buy outright. Is it the actual rights that you own or do you just have an option?

**PAL:** I own them, but it is an option. As we go along with the production of each picture, we pay off the option. I have to make a certain number of films or produce a television series in a certain amount of time, or I have to pay so much to continue my rights.

**CFQ:** How did you first discover the property and how did you acquire it?

**PAL:** I found Doc Savage on the bookstands. I looked over the stories on the bookstands and they impressed me. All you need is a spark. Look, someone gave me this original pulp magazine, it's called *The Fountain of Youth*. I could make a Doc Savage movie out of that title, without even following the story.

**CFQ:** Why did you choose to do *The Man of Bronze* first?

**PAL:** When we first started, we were going to make the best Doc Savage movie we could, the best story we could ever think of. We combined several stories and took from here and there, and although we read *The Man of Bronze*, the first book, and originally talked about making it the first film, we felt we could do a better story. When we finished the screenplay we discovered something: we don't know who Doc Savage is! Who were his parents? Why is he so wealthy? How did all this happen? And it was all there in *The Man of Bronze*. So we went back and wrote another screenplay, this one based on *The Man of Bronze*, and I think this is the better one, because in *The Man of Bronze* it's all laid out: what happened, how Doc Savage's father died, what Doc Savage believes, and why these characters, Monk and Ham and Long Tom went along with him.

The first script that we did, **DOC SAVAGE: THE ARCH-ENEMY OF EVIL**, we'll tag onto **THE MAN OF BRONZE**. "Look for the next thrilling adventure of Doc Savage: **DOC SAVAGE: THE ARCH-ENEMY OF EVIL**." And the story really begins, we'll show a page or two of it at the end of **THE MAN OF BRONZE**. And at the end of **THE ARCH-ENEMY OF EVIL**, we'll show the beginning of the next story we intend to do, "Watch for the next thrilling adventure of Doc Savage: **DOC SAVAGE** continued page 38

### THE DOC SAVAGE CODE

"Let me strive every moment of my life to make myself better and better, to the best of my ability, that all may profit by it.

"Let me think of the right, and lend all the assistance to those who need it, with no regard for anything but justice.

"Let me take what comes with a smile, without loss of courage.

"Let me be considerate of my country, of my fellow citizens, of my associates in everything I say and do.

"Let me do right to all, and wrong no man."

Doc Savage





Scenes from **DOC SAVAGE: THE MAN OF BRONZE**, a forthcoming release of Warner Bros, produced by George Pal. Left: Ron Ely as Doc Savage. Top: Ely leads Rennie (William Lucking, left) and Monk (Mike Miller, right) on the trail of villain Captain Seas. Middle: Ham (Darrell Swerling) and Monk at the Doc Savage headquarters. Bottom: Doc Savage rides off, triumphant, into the sunset. Pal feels audiences are ready for a real hero again.



# WILLIAM FRIEDKIN

Interviewed by William Crouch

The director of **THE EXORCIST** discusses the film that will shape the future of genre filmmaking in its approach to horror.

As Bill Friedkin sat in his eighth floor suite at the Continental Plaza Hotel in Chicago recently, drinking coffee and fielding questions, he conveyed the impression of a young man confident enough in his craft that pretensions and defenses were not necessary. Friedkin answered readily and freely a wide range of questions, giving no concern to the large amount of time required to cover the subject.

The subject of the interview was Friedkin's latest film **THE EXORCIST**, which has a good start toward breaking all box office records. Friedkin is a veteran director of several major Hollywood productions, including **BOYS IN THE BAND**, **THE NIGHT THEY RAIDED MINSKY'S**, **THE BIRTHDAY PARTY**, and the Academy Award winning **THE FRENCH CONNECTION**. He began his career in the mailroom at WGN-TV in Chicago. Within two years he was directing live TV, which led to documentary films and eventually an entree into feature film directing.

A youngish looking 34, clad in corduroys and open neck shirt, Friedkin occasionally adjusted his wire-rimmed glasses as he spoke quite candidly about **THE EXORCIST**. Those who have endured the long lines in order to see the film are aware of its extreme reality and the power of its visual horror. Friedkin has combined subdued acting, extremely graphic filming, and tight editing to create an aura of reality, and to set up his audience for some of the most shocking film horror ever seen.

CFQ: How did you first become involved with **THE EXORCIST**?

FRIEDKIN: I just felt the novel was very good material for a film and I called Bill Blatty and told him I was interested in it. He was pleased about that and he had already sold the material to Warner Brothers. Bill initiated discussions between myself and Warner Brothers and we were able to work it out. But, as I said, I read the book first and then called Bill. I knew Bill about six years ago when we both were asked by Blake Edwards to do a feature film of Peter Gunn, which was a TV series before that. And Bill had written a screenplay that was going to be used and Blake asked me to direct it. I didn't like the screenplay much at all and I told Bill and Blake that. I didn't get the job but Bill and I remained friends. He knew his screenplay left something to be desired and so our relationship began on a note of candor, and it's still that way.

CFQ: Did you have any input into the writing of the screenplay?

FRIEDKIN: Oh, yes. We worked together on the screenplay for about six months, while we were casting and choosing locations. I felt the novel was so cinematic that I gave Bill a marked up copy I made of the novel just telling him what I wanted to keep and what I wanted to cut. Blatty was a screen writer and has written about a half dozen screenplays. He wrote **A SHOT IN THE DARK** and **DARLING LILI**. So when he wrote the novel he was certainly not unaware of cinematic technique or the cinematic value of that novel.

CFQ: How much control did you have over the final product?

FRIEDKIN: As a director I had total control of the film. Everything that's on the screen is exactly what I put there and what I wanted. A screenplay tends to be not all that important to what my intent is on the screen. We got as good a script as we could get and I happen to think it was a marvelous script. But I never kill myself working on a script, because I'm not out to win the Pulitzer Prize for best screenplay. The screenplay is really the roadmap toward the movie and that's all it is. The screenplay gets altered when you do the casting and the actors contribute what they are going to contribute to it, plus ideas you get as the film is in progress. We worked on the script until we thought we had put everything in it that was necessary and then we stopped working on the script and we never thought about what control I might have. That is secondary. It wasn't at one time. I did two plays on film from very tight scripts and I have no interest in working that way again.

CFQ: Other than the sequence in Iraq, most of the specific references to Satanism and possession were eliminated from the first part of the film. Why?

FRIEDKIN: On the one hand, strange as it may sound, I tried not to make a film about Satan. **THE EXORCIST** is more about expectancy set, the mystery of faith, the mystery of goodness. What it is to me is a realistic film about unexplainable things. I personally have no strong conviction about Satan or a personified devil. I have no strong conviction against that either, but I didn't want to make a film that pushed that. There is a very solid underpinning in the film for any other explanation that one may wish to gather, but I take it that not too many people want other explanations.

I read a couple of news stories about the picture that said it makes doctors out to be foolish. That was never my intention. Because everything in the film dealing with medicine had the finest technical advisors I could get. The hypno-therapy scene, which was very brief, still had a man who is generally considered to be the leading hypno-therapist on the east coast as the technical advisor on the set. He's the man who came up with the cure for cigarette smoking through hypnosis. The arteriography and pneumoencephalography scene had as the technical advisor the head of the N. Y. U. radiology department. And those men knew the novel, read the screenplay, knew what was intended and gave their advice, opinion, and technical expertise on exactly what they would do if confronted with a person with all of these symptoms. And they all freely admitted they would have been at their wits end, and would have recommended a long convalescence, which is another way of saying an insane asylum, or just thrown in the towel and said that's the most they can do. And they all freely admitted they very often come up to that, where they say, we've x-rayed the brain, we find no lesion, there's nothing more we can do, you've got to try psychiatry. And then the psychiatrist says we've treated this person, been unsuccessful in finding a cure, and all we can recommend is further study. Now that's what happened in the original case in 1949. The best that medical science could offer, internally and externally, was brought to bear on that boy, and the exorcism was the last resort.

CFQ: Why the emphasis on the arteriography scene? By that I mean why did you show it in such elaborate detail?

FRIEDKIN: It was very important to show that medical science had gone to an extreme case before they reached the conclusion that there was no brain damage to this girl. An arteriography and pneumoencephalography are the two most advanced, sophisticated methods of x-raying the brain for brain damage. And it was very important to show that this girl's mother did not arbitrarily seek a priest to perform an exorcism, but that the mother had stood there and seen medical

William Crouch is a Ph.D. candidate in the School of Speech at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Previously he taught school in Michigan and at Emerson College in Boston. He is presently writing his dissertation and planning a book on the subject of Satanism and possession in contemporary novel and cinema.





THE  
EXOCIST







science go through this extremely detailed and quite dangerous elaborate x-ray function. One out of 1000 people generally die from that x-ray. Now it's not a spinal tap. It involves inserting a needle into the carotid artery in the neck which goes up into the arteries of the brain. It takes fluid from the arteries of the brain and in place of the fluid it injects air. The air goes up through this tube and the air outlines the arteries of the brain and then the three cameras, one on each side and one overhead, take these series of pictures, which when the doctor looks at them, show a beautiful outline around every artery in the brain. They can tell by the way those arteries are sitting whether or not there's a lesion. It's a process that's over in an hour, and in one hour they have determined if there's any brain damage. And if there is, like the doctor in the film said, all they have to do is remove it. They correct that broken artery. So its very important to show that an arteriogram and a pneumoencephalograph were performed and the results were negative. And at that point the neurologist says, "I think it's time to start looking for a psychiatrist."

CFQ: It seemed that in the hospital scene you used several extreme camera angles.

FRIEDKIN: To show how the thing looked the camera wasn't placed at any particular angle that would intensify one thing or another. I generally place the camera somewhere to best show the process that's going on. Now the arteriography and the pneumoencephalography that were performed were not done by actors, those were doctors that do it.

CFQ: Could you elaborate on how some of the special effects were accomplished?

FRIEDKIN: I'm not going to give that away. A film works on an audience successfully because of its editing. If any of the people standing in line to see the film were to have stood in the studio watching the filming they would not have been impressed by the way in which we put the material together. I'll tell you one thing, two things. There are no optical effects, that is, achieved by any special printing process. They were all done live, including the vomit. The second thing I'll tell you is that the levitation was done without wires and involved the use of magnetic field.

CFQ: Several reviews of *THE EXORCIST* that I have read describe your directorial technique as "documentary like." They call attention to the use of only one microphone and your fast-paced editing. Could you elaborate on these observations?

FRIEDKIN: The whole picture was recorded on one microphone. I never use more than one. I've worked in documentaries a good part of my life. I don't define documentary technique. I try to make a film as realistically as possible. There are different types of documentary. There is a Wolper type of documentary, a Flaherty, a Leacock, which is closer to cinema verite. I don't see that any of those techniques apply to *THE EXORCIST*, except that I did attempt to make a realistic story of inexplicable things.

Now as to the use of sound in the picture: of course, there are times the sound is meant to be lulling and general; there are other times it is meant to be abrasive and jolting. The effect of the demon voice was achieved by several methods. Occasionally Linda Blair's own voice is used and electronically distorted. Occasionally it is replaced by the voice of Mercedes McCambridge, which is again distorted. When I mean distorted, I mean the use of vari pitch and vari speed, mostly to slow down the voice or to alter its pitch without altering its synchronization with the little girl's lips. On other occasions it's a very simple factor of recording the voice through another channel motorola speaker in addition to a microphone, and the sound through the speaker mixed with the sound in the microphone gives a sharper more abrasive tone. But the most effective thing

about that voice is the way McCambridge dramatizes it, putting aside all the technical things that went into it.

CFQ: How did you decide on the quality of voice for the demon?

FRIEDKIN: I have a cassette recording of an actual exorcism performed in Rome. It's in Italian. It involves the exorcism of a fourteen year old boy. I got the tape through the Jesuit Provincial of New York and on the tape are the sounds produced by this young man supposedly possessed. The exorcism goes on for hours on this tape and it's those sounds on the tape that I emulated for the demon. Because it was never clear to me in the novel nor was Blatty able to verbalize how the demon should sound, I made the decision to use a woman's voice for the demon and not a man. But I wanted a woman's voice that would be sharp, abrasive, and slightly neutral, by that I mean neither male nor female. Certainly not a voice that anyone could say, "Oh, that's just a man's voice." To give you an idea of what a voice sounds like while under the influence of so called demonic possession—it generally gets deeper, gravely. If you've ever seen anyone having an epileptic fit, the voice takes on that character. Demonic possession is close to epilepsy, emphysema, the cursing disease, but it is when many supernatural events surround the victim that they know it's none of the above.

CFQ: Why did you eliminate any reference to odor in the room?

FRIEDKIN: Because you can't show odor. There is a quick reference to it in the hypnotherapy scene, when the girl opens her mouth and the doctors cough and the mother puts her handkerchief to her nose and they turn away and start to cough. The reason you aren't conscious of it there is because that's the first time the demon is heard, and it's really a wipe out. But you don't want to do every scene with people turning away and coughing. It's most difficult to portray the sense of smell without doing things uncineumatic.

CFQ: Is this the first horror movie you have made?

FRIEDKIN: No. I've never made a horror movie. I don't consider this a horror film. I would call *FRANKENSTEIN*, *Tod Browning's FREAKS*, *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA*, *THE WOLFMAN* with Lon Chaney Jr., horror films. There is a horror genre I'm conscious of, but less interested in than the Hammer stuff that goes on today. I've never made one of those. I'd like to someday.

CFQ: Were you influenced in the making of this film by any other film? I'm thinking specifically of films that deal with possession.

FRIEDKIN: I haven't seen any. There was a thing called *THE POSSESSION OF JOEL DELANEY*. I didn't see that.

CFQ: What about *ROSEMARY'S BABY*?

FRIEDKIN: I saw that. I don't think these two films compare on any level. I like *ROSEMARY'S BABY* very much. *ROSEMARY'S BABY* is, I guess, about Satanism and the occult, and *THE EXORCIST* is not about Satanism and the occult. As I say, I liked *ROSEMARY'S BABY* very much, one of the best films I've ever seen. But I was never conscious of it for one minute working on this film.

CFQ: At what point in the film making process did you devise your concepts of editing?

FRIEDKIN: I always shoot an entire film, let alone each sequence with a concept of how it is going to go together, although I usually revise my thinking in the cutting room. Editing is a process unto itself. I don't enjoy shooting so much, I love editing. I love to sit in the cutting room and work out editing problems. It's a totally different process. Shooting is always harried and pressured, and all kinds of outside factors get in. Editing is a kind of ivory tower existence. You can just sit there alone, and there are no weather worries, no crew of 40 people waiting to hear what you want to do, or no actors trying to work out acting problems. Editing is done in a much less harried fashion and therefore produces much more creative results than shooting.

CFQ: Do you shoot a great deal of extra footage?

FRIEDKIN: Yeah.

CFQ: Do you always do your own cutting?

FRIEDKIN: Yes. Every picture I've made so

I'm sure that aspects of the picture are unconvincing to many. It can't be unconvincing to someone who is throwing up or screaming while the picture is on. At the same time there are some sitting there saying 'Oh, come on, that's a crock of shit!'

far, including the documentaries has been my cut totally, although I've had a lot of input from people I respect. Very often it's a producer, sometimes a friend who I'll call in. There are a couple of directors who are friends of mine and we show each other our pictures. Francis Coppola, Peter Bogdanovich and I, who I think work totally different, will call each other in and say "What do you think of this?" I'll give them a critique of their films and they'll critique mine. And then we're free to do what we want about what we hear, but I've had a lot of input on work that I've done. A lot of ideas that go into every picture are not always the director's own ideas.

CFQ: Do you think the film increased the emphasis on the humanity of the mother and the young priest over the novel?

FRIEDKIN: Well there's a lot more time span on the characterizations of both in the novel, as there would be. The novel has some 400 pages to develop its characters. The film has two hours to deal with the whole story. I believe that in film, action is character. The action line must encompass the character. If the film did place more emphasis on the mother and the priest it is because you are able to see those people and empathize with their physical embodiment. On the other hand not as much time was spent in making them look more sympathetic or less sympathetic than in the novel. They were there to serve the story. And in film you have a lot less time to develop a story than you do in a novel.

CFQ: Is there any weakness that you as a reader found in the novel that the film overcame?

FRIEDKIN: Yes. The subplot with Karl, the butler, and his daughter who is a junkie, which I thought was a red herring.

CFQ: What about the book on possession which one of the other characters brings to the house?

FRIEDKIN: That was something I just dropped because there wasn't enough time. See, I feel that the audience today for movies is way ahead of the filmmakers. They've seen the best films ever made already. Before TV, audiences didn't have access to the best films. Audiences are very intelligent. Figures have been released that show 70% of movie goers are between the ages of 12 and 20 and are generally better educated. The hardest work I have as a filmmaker is to keep ahead of the audience, not bore them. They get impatient. So when you're doing *THE EXORCIST*, you have to decide how much tolerance you think they'll have for the build up, because they're all going in there knowing it's the story about a little girl "possessed by the devil." That's a general thing a lot of people bring to the theatre—"When are we going to see the devil possess the little girl?" Now to hold them, you're straining, you're working against what they really want.

CFQ: Were you afraid that much of the visual horror would be less than convincing?

FRIEDKIN: I must say, I didn't know what the audience reaction would be to any of it. I thought there were aspects of it that would be frightening but not shocking.

CFQ: Realistic?

FRIEDKIN: It depends on your definition of realism. The shit detector level of most people is different, depending a lot on attitudes of which I have neither control nor knowledge. I'm sure that aspects of the picture are unconvincing to many. It can't be unconvincing to someone who is throwing up or screaming while the picture is on. At the same time there are some sitting there

Scenes from the filming of *THE EXORCIST*, currently in release from Warner Bros. Top: Friedkin rehearses Ellen Burstyn in a scene where she seeks medical help for her disturbed daughter. Bottom: During filming, Friedkin takes Ellen Burstyn aside to discuss her most difficult scene in the picture, where she tearfully pleads with Father Karras to exorcise the demon that has possessed her daughter.



I know what things were in my head when I shot the film. I tell stories with pictures. I do know that the prologue was intended as visual metaphor. I really couldn't tell you what anything means on a more symbolic level. I never got out of high school!

saying "Oh, come on, that's a crock of shit." But the whole object of making a movie is to get an audience to suspend their disbelief. Most people go into a theatre, unless they're complete idiots, knowing that it's not happening. It's a shadow on a screen, on a two-dimensional surface. They know they are seeing a creation out of someone's imagination.

CFQ: Were you surprised about the strong reaction the film has evoked from many?

FRIEDKIN: Yesterday on the front page of the San Francisco Chronicle and the front page of a Pittsburgh newspaper, there are pictures and stories about people being led out of the theatre on stretchers, or running out screaming, fainting, vomiting. All over the country I get calls from radio stations asking me how I feel about that. I'm shocked that that happened. I thought that people might be moved by the film. I never thought they would become hysterical or start screaming or fainting. That was never in my wildest imagination. I can't understand, I don't know what to say about that.

CFQ: What do you see as the purpose of the prologue or the Iraq scene in the film?

FRIEDKIN: The Iraq scene introduces to you what kind of man Father Merrin is. The man who is called in as an exorcist. It establishes, in a kind of abstract fashion, that Merrin gets a premonition that he is going to have to perform an exorcism. It also establishes the fact that he is not a very well man. That he is a very sick man. And this sick old man, who is given to believe in omens and symbols, is going to be asked to drive a demon out of a little girl. It's a terrific device that was in the novel. I remember Blatty telling me that at one point his publisher asked him to cut it out of the novel. He did take it out before the book went to publication and then he missed it because he realized that it sets the tone for the whole thing. It starts the thing out on a kind of strange mysterious level.

It's not apparent why you're seeing it but later when you think about it, it all becomes clear. So I used it to foreshadow things visually. That sequence foreshadows things that occur later. For example, in my mind, the picks that you see being pushed into the ground foreshadow the crucifix being driven into the girl's vagina. The dirt oozing out in several shots foreshadow the vomiting. And I clearly shot every sound and sequence to foreshadow something that you see or hear later. Another example of this is the blacksmith sequence. The anvil sound is in the exorcism and the blacksmith who only has one eye, his eye resembles the little girl's eyes when they go up into their sockets.

CFQ: Are there any aspects of the film which you conceived as having larger symbolic implications?

FRIEDKIN: Well, I should say that I know what things were in my head when I shot the film. I really couldn't tell you what anything means on a more symbolic level. I never got out of high-school! But I do know that the prologue was intended as visual metaphor. I tell stories with pictures, and I have these visual metaphors that have meaning to me, but I don't know what they mean to you. They generally tend to be very simplistic things. They aren't deep for God's sake. Yoderofsky uses very difficult and meaningful psychological and religious symbols in his movies. I have no training in religion or psychology and I'd be a God damned fool to try and put that

sort of thing in. But I do try and put in visual metaphor which I think is a useful device for a filmmaker. In the early days of movies, they used to use rain when somebody was sad. What you constantly try to do is use the elements that you can to make a unifying thread. The threads that run through a film that come together at the film's end are what generally stay in people's minds. They generally don't talk about the plot. They talk about what did that mean. And what it means is what it means to each one, but you should really look for what moves you. Generally a film that moves you has a lot more going for it than what's on the surface.

CFQ: What about the ambiguity of the film in regard to the authenticity of the possession? Can you comment on that?

FRIEDKIN: I am not convinced that the possession was real. It was surprising to me how many people were willing to say it was possession and suspend their disbelief. I made the film in a way that it could very definitely not be possession. There are very clear cut things in the movie that indicate that what you are seeing is always from someone's point of view and from someone in an extremely heightened state of mind. There is a shot, for example, of the apparition of the demon Pazuzu appearing in the room that both priests, or one or the other may be seeing. Now I don't say that the demon Pazuzu was in the room, I'm saying that it's possible, given the background, the training, and the upbringing of these priests, that they may be victims of momentary insanity. The mother in a heightened condition may be contributing to what they are seeing and calling it supernatural. There are several explanations which the film leaves open. Either she was possessed and there was an exorcism that seemed to work, or the girl was not possessed and she had a disease for which there was no name and it was so radical and severe that it caused the people around her to believe in demonic possession. If you go looking for the devil, chances are you're going to find him.

CFQ: Do you see THE EXORCIST as a type of statement of faith on the part of yourself or anyone else?

FRIEDKIN: No, I'm not claiming that this is a statement of faith. There have been some reviews by some assholes who came up here with preconceived notions. For example, there was a woman who came up yesterday and printed a complete distortion of what I said. I am not claiming that the film has a religious message or is a statement of faith. I am saying that the film is about the mystery of faith, but it presents no answers to that, offers no direction to anyone about their faith or whether they should or should not have faith. The film is about the mystery of faith. I don't feel it has a religious message for anyone. I'm aware, of course, that some people get a religious message from TREASURE OF SIERRA MADRE which they view as a parable of good versus evil. I'm not responsible for what people take out. But I did not intend the film as a religious tract. I personally do not belong to a religious group and I'm not attempting to exploit religion or push it, or push the "God Is Dead" cult. It was never in my thinking.

CFQ: Do you like working with adaptations of novels?

FRIEDKIN: Well, it depends. The most important thing a director, filmmaker, does is choose his material. I like working first of all with great stories for what I consider to be the bulk of the world audience. For example, "I really want this movie to appeal to the New York sophisticates and I don't really care about the rest of the world," or "I want to do a movie to appeal mostly to jocks, or blacks." I'm aware that there's a vast audience out there that varies in size, shape, weight, age, color, religious background, and morality. I am a man who attempts to serve the audience. So I try to take all those factors in relation to one another and make a film that will serve them. That's why most people go to the movies, to become emotionally involved in some way. So what I'm looking for is a good story, because in my opinion, when people are living on the moon they are still going to be watching good stories, they are still going to be watching John Ford pictures. And I don't think they are going to be watching anything that is far out or indeci-

pherable of inaccessible to the average intelligence. So if a good story comes out of a novel or play and I think it's a good story, I'll do it. It isn't that easy to come up with one yourself.

CFQ: What about the rating? Was there some problem in getting an R?

FRIEDKIN: No problem whatever. The film runs two hours and was shown to a rating board on October 3 at ten A. M. At 12:30 I was called and told the board was deeply moved by the picture, they think it's magnificent and are going to give it an R rating. They were not asking for any cuts or changes to get an R. None were requested and none were made. Now the rating is not given out arbitrarily. The rating board is about seven people. I don't know the male female composition of it. But they view a film and give a rating based on very strict legal guidelines. And THE EXORCIST falls well within the legal boundaries, the legal guidelines of an R rating. If it did not, we would have gotten an X, or been asked if we wanted an R to make certain cuts to achieve it.

CFQ: So you anticipated no trouble?

FRIEDKIN: No, I'm aware of the legal definition of obscenity in this country today. It isn't necessarily what I agree with, but I know them. I have read excerpts of the last supreme court opinion on the definition of obscenity. I read that long before I made THE EXORCIST and when I finished THE EXORCIST I read the revised code. As a matter of fact, I was called to Washington to testify before the Revised Criminal Code Senate Sub-Committee. One of the things I said was that if they passed the law tomorrow saying that you could not depict sexual intercourse or have any vile language on the screen, it wouldn't affect the work of one serious filmmaker, myself included. It wouldn't stop me one minute from doing what I wanted. The most sexual stuff I've seen on the screen is all in the mind. I personally don't get any sensual kick from watching two people fuck in a movie. I don't happen to be a voyeur. To me there's sensuality in just the sight of certain women moving across a room on screen.

CFQ: Why didn't you choose bigger name stars for the characters?

FRIEDKIN: I'm not interested in stars. I'm interested in intelligent actors.

CFQ: Is there any pressure on you from studios to use particular actors?

FRIEDKIN: Not any more. Not for the last couple of pictures. Gene Hackman isn't a star. Ellen Burstyn isn't a star. Von Sydow isn't a star. Lee Cobb is a fine actor but his name on a picture wouldn't sell two tickets anywhere in the world to people who didn't want to see it. No, generally I have an idea of who I want. For the characters of Regan and Karras I didn't want anybody who had ever been in a film before for personal reasons. I wanted an audience identification and discovery of these two people. In the case of Father Karras I wanted an intelligent actor who looked like he could be a priest. Not Paul Newman or Bob Redford or somebody in a priest collar, or Jack Nicholson who wanted to play the part. In the case of the little girl, none of the young girls that I have seen on TV have the ability. I had to go find somebody. I felt she should come from a stable home atmosphere, not from a broken home or a slum background. She should be a good student, my definition of a good student, not just somebody who passes exams. That's just sort of the broad general guideline I had.

CFQ: There have been rumors about strange occurrences on the set and the little girl being emotionally disturbed following the completion of filming.

FRIEDKIN: The girl is obviously not emotionally disturbed. We could run around and try and clean up all those rumors but most journalists working in the entertainment field I find are so vicious, are so stupid, or so small minded, that

Scenes from the filming of THE EXORCIST, currently in release from Warner Bros. Top: Friedkin works with Ellen Burstyn in a scene involving her reaction to a point-of-view shot. Bottom: In a relaxed moment during a break in filming, Friedkin chats with Lee J. Cobb and Jason Miller. Of casting the picture Friedkin says: "I'm not interested in stars. I'm interested in intelligent actors."











it doesn't really pay to do that. So what we're going to do is simply have a reception for Linda Blair and introduce her to the reporters who have chosen to print that stuff. Linda Blair lives in Westport, Connecticut, is a straight A student and a highly intelligent person. She is probably less disturbed by any of these events than any one in the audience. She couldn't be in a better frame of mind or better health. Neither she nor I ever considered that anyone would draw that conclusion from the fact that she gave a great performance in the movie.

CFQ: How did you find her?

FRIEDKIN: I auditioned about 500 girls myself. The main factor important to me in choosing her was her emotional stability.

CFQ: Was it difficult working with a child in some of the more disturbing scenes, such as the crucifix masturbation?

FRIEDKIN: No it wasn't. She was twelve when we did the picture and she's fourteen now. She has life in pretty good focus, which I don't think is necessarily a factor of age. Any number of people I know in their forties or fifties are not emotionally stable. Not only could they not have performed that scene, they can't even look at it. Linda Blair is a bright, ordinary person. When I say ordinary I don't mean to belittle her. We're living in a time where if someone is ordinary that's a put-down. She is not a genius, or precocious, she is just in extremely good health. This is the first time she has ever acted. She was a model, and an extra in a couple of films out of New York. But she had never acted and I just cast her out of instinct from talking to her. It took three to four months of seeing twenty to thirty girls ranging in age from nine to fourteen.

CFQ: Has the final cost been tabulated for the film?

FRIEDKIN: I don't want to discuss the cost of the film. I almost never dodge a question, but I don't really think it's germane. I don't think reporters have any way of judging these figures. If I were to tell you the picture cost half a million or ten million dollars, those would both be big sums to you, but you would have no way of judging if it were well spent. The only way you have of judging if the money was well spent is if the picture is ultimately successful and returns its investment. I tend to not be limited by any arbitrary budget on any picture I make. That was true of *THE FRENCH CONNECTION*, which happened to be an extremely low budget film by film industry standards. But that doesn't concern me. I shot what I thought was right and I quit when I felt I had all I wanted. That's what I did on *THE EXORCIST*. I don't really have the time or interest to be concerned with the budgets. Other people I respect do that. So, just to quote a figure would mean nothing. Newspapers do that, they quote rumors.

CFQ: Have you been surprised at the critical reaction to *THE EXORCIST*?

FRIEDKIN: I have not read one review of the picture yet. People like yourself have told me that Pauline Kael didn't like the film or so and so didn't like the film, or somebody else loved the film. I can honestly say that it doesn't affect me one way or the other. I don't even think about it. It's true that I have from time to time seen reviews in the newspaper. I'll come across reviews and I'll look at it and it might be a rave or it might be unfavorable and I'm totally unmoved either way. Because I either don't know these people or I do know and don't respect them. Pauline Kael is not a critic that I respect. She has a tendency to condemn filmmakers and I don't respect any critic that condemns an artist on any level. This is not the path to constructive criticism. She called Sam Peckinpah a fascist in her review. At that point I ceased having respect for her. There is a way of saying that you have a radical dislike

for someone's work and not making it personal.

I haven't read any reviews of *THE EXORCIST*, but I've read a lot of news stories. I have been surprised at the reactions, the violent reactions that people have. But if you're a filmmaker you cannot be stopped by the reviews, influenced to either encourage yourself or to be discouraged. When I was starting out I read reviews. For example, I worked in Chicago TV for eight years and a good deal of what I did got reviewed. And I must say that if you had read any of the early reviews I got you would have thought that I was the greatest artist to have ever appeared behind the TV cameras, and of course, I wasn't. I was a rank amateur who didn't know what the hell he was doing. I was just learning. But I really became lulled by the reviews I was getting. That's very dangerous. That's also dangerous, contrarily. If you respect the reviewer and he gives you a bad review, you say "Oh, I like this reviewer and he or she doesn't like the film, I must have fucked up." Many directors have gone through this. Many friends of mine are really influenced by reviews and are really blowing their minds. I know musicians who have done that. Jethro Tull went off the road because of the reviews. He was packing houses, filling halls, people wanted to hear and see him, the reviews were devastating and he stopped touring. So I don't read reviews.

CFQ: What feedback did you get from the studio?

FRIEDKIN: They loved it. Period. I never got any other reaction. Some of the people in the studio had similar reactions to people in the audience, they couldn't sleep. But no one ever asked me to change it. Ted Ashley gave me extremely constructive criticism of the way I had cut it in terms of certain sequences and I felt his suggestions so good I went back and made some alterations in structure that I think really helped the picture. The Warner Brothers executives all saw the picture and gave me their reactions. A couple of scenes in particular were altered. For example, the scene where Father Karras tells the other priest in the hangout that he's lost his faith—that was originally placed before the scene where he goes to see his mother. The people at Warner's thought it would play better if it was after he saw his mother and I was able to make that switch and I think it was a great idea. I always go for input and if I think it's a good idea, I'll use it. I don't care if the construction crew has an idea, if it's better than the one I had, I'll use it.

CFQ: Are you completely satisfied with the way *THE EXORCIST* turned out?

FRIEDKIN: I would always change everything I've done if I had the opportunity. But then I never do. Once I've finished a picture and delivered it to the studio, I make it a very special point that "that's it." Especially if it seems to be working. It's like Barbra Streisand. She's out in the street working with a broken nose. Everybody told her before she started, "Go fix your nose, it'll never work." And she's out there in the street working and she's a hit. So why fix it? There are a lot of technical faults in *THE EXORCIST* and *THE FRENCH CONNECTION* that I'm aware of, that for laziness or whatever else, I wasn't able to correct. I now am able to correct them, they'd let me. But I won't do it if it's working for the audience. I just take this attitude and say "I've made this picture, that's the best I could do at this stage of my ability and to hell with it." I'll try and fix what I know is wrong with the film on the next film I make.

CFQ: What is next?

FRIEDKIN: I'll do another suspense film. I'm looking for a project now, but it will be another suspense film at Universal.

CFQ: Can you tell me what fear is and how you try to deal with it in your films?

FRIEDKIN: Yes, I can talk about it anyway. There's a difference between rational and irrational fear. I've tried to explore both in a couple of pictures. *THE BIRTHDAY PARTY* happens to be about irrational fear. Irrational fear is a bit more difficult to deal with because it involves paranoia. To simplify it, *THE BIRTHDAY PARTY* is about five people in a room, and somebody says something and one person in the room thinks it is funny, the other pays no attention to it at all, somebody else is shocked by what is said, and the other person is terrified for no apparent rea-

People are afraid while they're standing in line. And for the first hour of the film, while there is little more than exposition and some of that very hard to follow, people are working themselves into an emotional state that is inductive to becoming terrified.

son because what was said has struck some chord in this person that goes so deep that he can't even communicate the reason for his fear even to himself. Irrational fear which we all go through, is deep seated and psychological. It would take years of analysis to get to. Why, for example, when you go to a party and there are 150 people enjoying themselves, do you feel absolutely terrified of social contact?

Rational fear, on the other hand, is induced by something called expectancy set, which is the personal feeling that something terrifying is going to happen to you. For example, you're walking down the street at night and you're convinced, not for reasons of paranoia, that someone is following you. So every sound you hear, whether it's a car coming around the corner, or leaves on the street, or a twig breaking under your foot, or footsteps, everything contributes to your fear, and this is because you're expecting to be frightened. The cinema takes advantage of this factor. Alfred Hitchcock takes advantage of the fact that an audience comes into the theatre expecting to be scared. When they are standing in line they are afraid. So he takes them for about an hour and dangles them and lets them do it for themselves until he hits them with something and at that point, when he hits them, he either fulfills their expectations and fantasy or he lets them down, depending on how skillful is his punch.

The same is true for *THE EXORCIST*. People are afraid while they're standing in line. And for the first hour of the film, while there is little more than exposition and some of that very hard to follow unless you've read the book, people are working themselves into an emotional state that is inductive to becoming terrified. Those are the factors that contribute to fear.

Fear is generally something that is behind you, speaking in psychological terms. It's generally something behind you that you cannot see but that you can feel, like a loud sound or someone touching you suddenly. Or it's something behind the door that's about to be opened. Most of the nightmares that you read about someone having involve someone coming up to a closed door behind which there is the unknown. Another factor, in more physical terms would be a cold chill on the back of the neck, be it a hand or a chill when there is no cold. That's what fear is and does. Not so much the butterflies in your stomach, which come from anxiety, but that feeling on the back of your neck, a chill. These are just some verbalized thoughts on fear.

CFQ: What particular director do you admire?

FRIEDKIN: Of working directors, I particularly admire Kubrick, and of directors who are no longer active, Raoul Walsh. There are a lot of films I like, but I wouldn't necessarily say that everything that those directors have made I admire. For instance, *CITIZEN KANE* is the best film I've ever seen, but I don't like most of Welles' other work. I don't even relate the intelligence of *CITIZEN KANE* to the intelligence of *THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS*. I like *TREASURE OF SIERRA MADRE*, but not too much else of John Huston's. *ALL ABOUT EVE*, *PATHS OF GLORY*, *8 1/2*, *WHITE HEAT*, *2001*, *L'AVENTURA*, these are the movies I use a lot, by that I mean look at and assimilate.

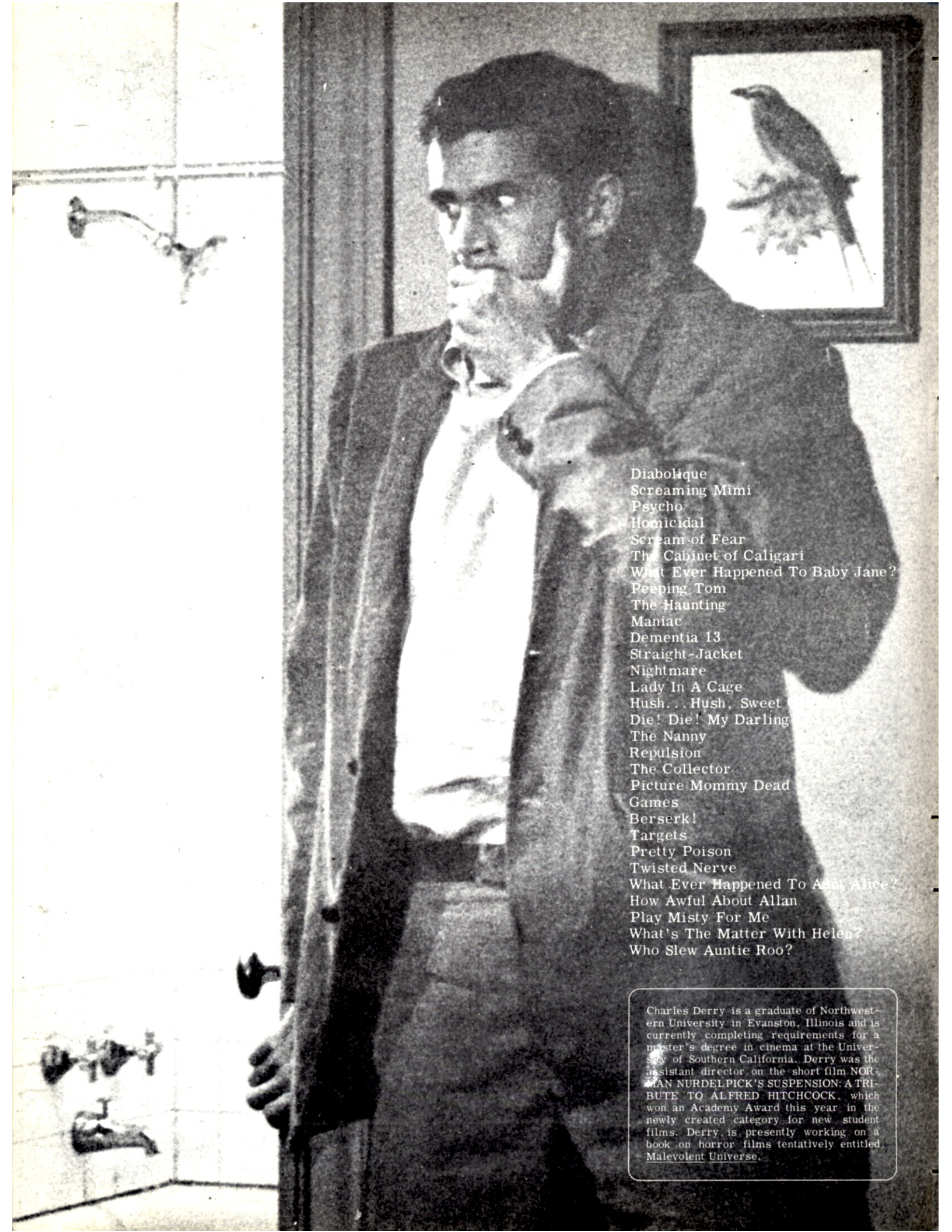
CFQ: Do you consider yourself an auteur?

FRIEDKIN: No, just a filmmaker.

OCFQO

Scenes from the filming of *THE EXORCIST*, currently in release from Warner Bros. Top: Friedkin teases young Linda Blair in preparing her for a scene. The twelve-year old New England girl had no previous acting experience. Bottom: Jason Miller makes a point and Friedkin listens. Says Friedkin: "I always go for input. I don't care if the construction crew has an idea, if it's better than the one I had, I'll use it."





Diabolique  
Screaming Mimi  
Psycho  
Homicidal  
Scream of Fear  
The Cabinet of Caligari  
What Ever Happened To Baby Jane?  
Peeping Tom  
The Haunting  
Maniac  
Dementia 13  
Straight-Jacket  
Nightmare  
Lady In A Cage  
Hush... Hush, Sweet  
Die! Die! My Darling  
The Nanny  
Repulsion  
The Collector  
Picture Mommy Dead  
Games  
Berserk!  
Targets  
Pretty Poison  
Twisted Nerve  
What Ever Happened To Aunt Alice?  
How Awful About Allan  
Play Misty For Me  
What's The Matter With Helen?  
Who Slew Auntie Roo?

Charles Derry is a graduate of Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and is currently completing requirements for a master's degree in cinema at the University of Southern California. Derry was the assistant director on the short film NORMAN NURDELPICK'S SUSPENSION: A TRIBUTE TO ALFRED HITCHCOCK, which won an Academy Award this year in the newly created category for new student films. Derry is presently working on a book on horror films tentatively entitled Malevolent Universe.



We all go  
a little crazy  
sometimes.

--Anthony  
Perkins  
in  
PSYCHO

# THE HORROR OF PERSONALITY

Charles Derry defines and examines an important sub-genre of the horror film.

Did the horror film die in the fifties and early sixties? Although a good case could be made for the answer Yes, it is probably more accurate to suggest that the classic horror film had merely been (temporarily?) supplanted by at least two major sub-genres: the science fiction horror film in the fifties, which was a logical outgrowth of the end of the war atomic bomb anxieties; and what I call the horror of personality films, which seem to have started later, during the sixties. In order to understand exactly what the horror of personality entailed and exactly why it managed to become the dominant force in box-office horror in the sixties, one must first understand the horror traditions this sub-genre began to break from.

One of the most important aspects of the classic horror film is the key figure of horror itself. Usually, it is something abstracted from man: a horror that keeps its distance from man both aesthetically and metaphysically. For instance, Dracula is physically unlike the average man in his dress, his fangs, his behavior; and although any man may become a vampire, the world can quite visably be divided into vampires and non-vampires. King Kong is also quite physically unlike man: he is gigantic and an ape. Quite obviously these monsters are horrible because they present alternatives to the tenuous human equilibrium. That is, a vampire is too close to man for comfort; even on a simplistic level it is obvious that King Kong represents an aspect of man that man has managed to suppress. As presented in the classic horror story, the horror itself is both distanced from man, and what is more important, highly symbolic. The horror may be a metaphorical manifestation of man's animal instincts (KING KONG), his evil desired (witches, Satanism), or his fear of being unliving (THE MUMMY, zombies), but the horror is certainly not man itself. This separation usually enables man in the horror films to directly confront his evil enemy as surely as one could confront one's reflection in a distorting mirror. Almost always the horror is vanquished.

An interesting variation of this pattern, and one that by contrast makes the symbolic schizophrenia in the usual classic horror film even more clear is THE DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE series, in which the normal man and the horror actually co-exist in the same body. This lessening of the aesthetic distances between the horror and man makes the series an interesting precursor to the horror of personality film; for in the Stevenson series the horror is already less symbolic and indeed, quite literal: a struggle between man's rational instincts and his animal instincts. The horror of personality films in the sixties such as PSYCHO, STRAIGHT-JACKET, and WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE? de-

crease the distance of the horror even further: the horror becomes not at all symbolic, but quite specific.

Aside from studying the nature of the horror, it is equally important to study the explanation of the horror within the context of the story. It seems to me that in the classic horror story there are two basic methods of explaining things away—either supernaturally, or pseudo-scientifically. Into the supernatural group one could fit all the monsters and horrors that are somehow involved with religions and rituals. This would include all the witchcraft movies (with their obvious Christian basis), and other horrors such as THE MUMMY (Egyptology and re-incarnation), DRACULA (Christianity, again), zombie movies (with their stress on Voodoo), and perhaps even THE GOLEM (with its magic book and magic star). Into the other, the pseudoscientific group, one could fit all the monsters and horrors that are the result of a scientist figure who goes too far. This group would include all the animal men, and of course, all the FRANKENSTEIN variations. An interesting variation of the mad scientist explanation is used in KING KONG, where the mad scientist is represented by the "mad" movie director who quite literally goes too far—that is, back to a prehistoric island.

Historically, the pseudoscientific basis proved to be more fruitful during the fifties. It was during this period that the science fiction genre became important, helping both to blur the distinctions between the two genres, and seemingly to temporarily end the popularity of the supernatural basis—at least until the very personal Roger Corman cycle in the early sixties, and the striking re-emergence of the witchcraft cycle in the late sixties. It is quite important to notice that in movies such as PSYCHO, WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?, HUSH...HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE, LADY IN A CAGE, and PEEPING TOM, the extreme specificity of the horror, and the horror's manifestation as insanity make neither of the two classic bases for explanation necessary. Can PSYCHO be explained away either supernaturally or pseudoscientifically? Quite clearly, the terms are not only unnecessary, but not applicable. It was in the early sixties during the Kennedy years that the country began to be racked by violence. Crime began going up astronomically, and suddenly there were riots in the streets that the people could not just understand. And perhaps even more importantly, senseless mass murderers (Richard Speck, the Boston Strangler, Charles Whitman, etc.) were constantly in the headlines. (Indeed, it is interesting to note that the highest concentration numerically of these films took place in 1964-65, directly after the Kennedy assassination.) Thus,

one can see why in this period pseudoscientific horror or supernatural horror were not really the concerns of the day. What was horrible, however, was man. It was a horror that was specific, non-abstract, and one which did not need a metaphor. Since the symbolic schizophrenia of the classic horror film had now become a literal insanity, it was necessary for a whole new basis of explanation to be applied. What does seem to have been adopted in the early sixties in these horror films (however sometimes skeptically) was the psychological explanation. Violence and horror were not explained in terms of science or religion, but in terms of psychology. This is made obvious by the end of PSYCHO, the very Freudian recurring Oedipal complexes in especially the Aldrich films, and the obsession with sex in all the films from PSYCHO to STRAIGHT-JACKET to BERSERK! to MANIA to ORGASMO. In a way, the psychological explanation enables us to distance ourselves from the horror: "It's all right, it was something in his mind that made the killer sick." It's really amazing to notice how often in these films the Freudian explanation seems to make almost no sense, yet the audience, willing to grasp onto anything, will quickly accept it. How many people have come out of PSYCHO reassured saying, "It was about a crazy man who thought he was his mother," rather than, "It was about a man who acted just about as normal as you or me, but really wasn't." It is not till the end of the sixties that the psychological base begins to be overtly rejected also. THE DEVIL'S OWN in 1967 and especially ROSEMARY'S BABY in 1968 mark the re-emergence of the supernatural as a major force in explaining away evil; and TARGETS and PRETTY POISON in 1968 both exhibit a strange kind of matter-of-factness to their violence which suggests that—and this perhaps is the most horrible of all—there is no explanation. Some people just kill.\*

Before I go on and talk about what seems may be a waning of the horror of personality films as a distinct and thriving (sub-)genre, it would now be fruitful to discuss the films in question—concentrating not only on the strict horror of personality films, but also on those outside the genre which in some way relate to the genre's develop-

\*It is interesting to note that although Hitchcock pioneered in another sub-genre of horror when he made THE BIRDS in 1962, this sub-genre of outside forces taking over the world with no pseudoscientific, religious, or psychological explanation acceptable did not really thrive until roughly the late '60s and early '70s (WILLARD, BEN, FROGS, NIGHT OF THE LEPUS, etc.)—the same period as these later no-reason-at-all horror of personality films.



ment or refinement. Among the many films I would include two as being seminal—first *DIABOLIQUE*, and second, *PSYCHO*.

*DIABOLIQUE* was made in 1955, and its inclusion as a seminal film may seem initially surprising. First of all, the film does not come out of the tightly constructed suspense-melodrama oeuvre of its director Henri-Georges Clouzot. And secondly, the film predates the cycle of the true horror of personality films by at least five years. Nevertheless, the film is responsible for delineating many of the horror elements that would later become so dominant in the genre. The plot, based on the novel by Boileau and Narcejac,\* is very complex; at its center is the rather strange and almost perverse relationship between two women played by Simone Signoret and Vera Clouzot, two women who are inextricably entangled in a monstrous crime: the murder of the one woman's husband. At the end of the film it is discovered that the plot is even more complicated than originally thought, and that the unmarried woman had plotted with the husband all along (who was not really killed) and was rather trying to drive the other woman crazy. Of course, the plot idea of trying to drive someone crazy is not completely new—Charles Boyer tried to do it in *Ingrid Bergman in GASLIGHT* in 1944, but in that film (and those of that type) the emphasis was on the mysterious elements belonging more to the Daphne du Maurier or Mary Stewart Gothic Romance. In *DIABOLIQUE*, the emphasis is on the rather everyday, matter of fact, sordid horror, and on the tense psychological relationships between the characters. The major genre idea of *DIABOLIQUE*, that of two women in a psychological horror-ific situation, can be seen in many of the notable horror of personality films of the sixties—most specifically: *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?*, *NIGHTMARE*, *HUSH...HUSH*, *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, *PICTURE MOMMY DEAD*, *GAMES*, *THE MAD ROOM*, *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO AUNT ALICE?*, and *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?* Of course, the Clouzot film does not have the same poetically pessimistic quality of some of the later films in that its action is surprisingly clear of sad, poignant time jumps, and the relative youth of its women deprives the film of a particular pathos. The film also lacks the very strong emphasis on insanity itself—which was, with *PSYCHO* in 1960, to become perhaps the strongest of the genre's traits. The film does, however, contain strong elements of the ambiguity which later was to become such an important part; the unanglicized title of the film is *LES DIABOLIQUES* (The Fiends). While watching the film one assumes that the fiends are Simone Signoret and Vera Clouzot; at its end one presumes the true fiends are Simone Signoret and Paul Meurisse. The question to be asked is: who then, are the true *diaboliques*? Or, are we all fiends? In the sixties, with *PSYCHO* and *HUSH...HUSH*, *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, we are to ask a similar question, but with a different object. And that is: who then, are the true crazy people? Or, are we all?

Except perhaps for *SCREAMING MIMI*, a film made in 1958 which contains many of the same ideas as *PSYCHO*, but in a less integrated form, *PSYCHO* marks the true beginning of the horror of personality genre. It is a seminal film not only because of its emphasis on the ambiguity and horror of insanity, but also because it was tremendously successful in terms of its box-office. It was evidently dealing with issues that the audiences were responding to, and it, almost single handedly managed to spawn the genre. I will not try to deal with the film in terms of Hitchcock as auteur (as it has been done quite admirably by such as Robin Wood and V. F. Perkins) but instead will deal with the film in terms of the genre it was breaking away from, a manner in which I believe the film has rarely been discussed. As I stated before, the classic pseudoscientific horror

film was changed in the fifties to the dominant science fiction film or the science fiction horror. The supernatural horror film seemed to become relatively recessive during the fifties—although the supernatural tradition was carried on rather strangely by a series of haunted house movies in the late fifties. In fact, during the period between *DIABOLIQUE* in 1955 and *PSYCHO* in 1960, these haunted house movies were the dominant element (in terms of the number of films released) in the supernatural horror. (Though of course these films were by and large continuations of the haunted house films which were such a staple in the forties). Some of the titles in these fifties films include *THE SCREAMING SKULL* (1958), *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL* (1958), *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM* (1959), *THE BAT* (1959), *TERROR IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE* (1958), *I BURY THE LIVING* (1958), and *13 GHOSTS* (1960). Many of these films were William Castle Productions, or for American-International. Even more featured some special kind of gimmick, such as *MACABRE*, where theatre patrons received a thousand dollar life insurance policy from Lloyds of London in case any of them should die of fright; or *Emergo* (in *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*) where a wired skeleton would float over the heads of the audience; or *PsychoRama* (in *TERROR IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE*) in which subliminal pictures were used to psychologically affect the audience; or *Percepto* (in *THE TINGLER*) where vibrating motors were attached to the underside of theatre seats and which, at the proper moments, caused tingling sensations in a delicate portion of the theatregoer's anatomy; or *Hypnomagic* (in *THE HYPNOTIC EYE*) in which one of the actors tries to hypnotize the audience; or *Illusion-O* (in *13 GHOSTS*) in which special glasses allow the ghosts to become visible. Not all these movies took place in haunted houses (*I BURY THE LIVING* took place in a graveyard); nevertheless, the idea of horror in these films was very clearly associated with a dark environment. And in almost all of these movies the horror was experienced by the audience as a supernatural, mystical one—for example, in *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL* there are scary apparitions; in *I BURY THE LIVING* people who own funeral plots begin dying as a psychic result of the cemetery owner's error in mixing up the plots on his map. Yet ironically enough, although the shocks in these films are largely experienced as horror, the denouement of the films suggests that the films are really in the mystery genre and are only masquerading as horror. For instance, in *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL* we discover that all the apparitions have only been carefully sustained illusions carried out by Vincent Price; and in *I BURY THE LIVING* we discover that the people have really been killed by a gravedigger being phased out of his job who wanted revenge. Thus in both of these films, the horror of the supernatural did not really, in terms of the plot itself, ever exist in the first place. Perhaps this tradition can be traced back to that famous theatre and film staple *SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE*, and also (though less directly) to those mystery novels which proliferated in the twenties and thirties in which one by one people in a haunted house/island/ski lodge are killed—except that in the haunted house films, the horror-mystical elements are played up and the rational explain-it-all denouement played down. *PSYCHO*, quite apart from any auteur considerations, can be seen to relate quite clearly to this spate of haunted house movies—most obviously since the main house in *PSYCHO* is absolutely typical with its stairways, dark corners, and hidden basement. Yet the most amazing thing about *PSYCHO* is that from the beginning to the end it very consciously goes against all the established conventions, and in doing so manages to redefine what horror is by relating it to the modern 1960's sensibilities. For instance, although the major horror in the haunted house movies takes place in the dark of the house, *PSYCHO*'s major horror takes place in the bright whiteness of a shower stall. Hitchcock uses the very generic house in his film only to foil the audience's expectations of having the most horrific act happen there. And when Hitchcock finally does use the house as the environment of horror (when Arbogast is killed), the horror does not proceed from the house itself; rather, it proceeds from

the character of the killer for which the house is only a metaphor. And whereas many of the haunted house films are really mystery films masquerading as horror, *PSYCHO* (with its inquiring detective) is really a horror film masquerading as a mystery. (After all, Hitchcock does even murder the detective.) Although in many of the haunted house movies the explanation at the end alleviates or actually repudiates the earlier horror, the explanation and denouement at the end of *PSYCHO* tend to crystallize the horror even further. In regard to the classic horror genre, *PSYCHO* breaks away too in that the fear in *PSYCHO* is not particularly of death or symbolic evil; the fear is instead of living in a crazy world, a world in which one can be physically mutilated in close-up. As such, *PSYCHO* takes what had been a minor theme from the mad-scientist films, insanity, and augments its horror by using it completely unrelated to any mystic/scientific superposition such as a Frankenstein monster or a Wolf Man. Thus, the film breaks away from the two standard realms of horror, the pseudoscientific and the supernatural, and substitutes instead the psychological. Indeed, in its redefinition of horror to the psychological, a step that seemed in 1960 (five years after *DIABOLIQUE*) particularly suited to the times, in its concern with the anxiety of living and the nearness of mutilation, and most especially in its emphasis on the ambiguity of insanity ("We all go a little mad sometime," says Anthony Perkins), *PSYCHO* can be viewed as the fountainhead from which all the horror of personality films were to flow.

Right after *PSYCHO* began breaking box-office records, the Louis Malle film *ELEVATOR TO THE SCAFFOLD* was released in the United States with the changed title *FRANTIC*, probably to try to cash in a bit on *PSYCHO*'s success. *FRANTIC* was followed by a William Castle production of *HOMICIDAL*. *HOMICIDAL* is about Miriam Webster's relationship with her half-brother Warren and his strange wife Emily. At the end of the film after some killings (the knife again being the horrible and phallic weapon), it is discovered that Warren and Emily are one and the same person. Although I have never been able to completely follow the explanation at the end (I'm still not sure whether Warren/Emily was at birth a boy or a girl), it is quite clear that transvestism, sexual perversion, and perhaps even an operation in Denmark were involved in his/her horrible identity. The confusion is further compounded by a literal double curtain call at the film's end in which the star's name is revealed as Jean (Gene?) Arless, without the slightest clue as to whether he/she were in real life a man or a woman. The effect is really quite unsettling. It may be possible that Jean Arless' nonappearance in film thereafter may be related to the ambiguity of even her offscreen sexuality. Ironically, before the ending of the film both Warren and Emily appear to be physically normally good-looking; after the surprise is revealed, they are perceived anew by the audience as both looking rather bizarre. *HOMICIDAL* is basically important for its reassociation of insanity with sexuality. It is a relationship that is reaffirmed in many of the films—especially those of the early sixties such as *PEEPING TOM*, *THE PSYCHOPATH*, *THE COLLECTOR*, *HUSH...HUSH*, *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, *DIE! DIE! MY DARLING!*, and *TWISTED NERVE*. Indeed, the element of sexual perversion, or at least of sexuality off-kilter (such as in *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?*) is present in many of the films even when it is not related directly to the possible insanity of the protagonists. The influence of *PSYCHO* is further, and quite obviously apparent in many of the titles released in the sixties—titles that include *MANIA*, *TRAUMA*, *MANIAC*, *DEMENCIA 13*, *STRAIGHT-JACKET*, *PYRO*, *SHOCK TREATMENT*, *THE PSYCHOPATH*, *PSYCHO-CIRCUS*, *BERSERK*, *TWISTED NERVE*, *THE MAD ROOM*, *FANATIC* (the alternate title of *DIE! DIE! MY DARLING!*), and even *PARANOIA* (an Italian sexploitation film originally called *ORGASMO*, but partially an homage to two horror films by Robert Aldrich).

The next really important film in the horror of personality genre is *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?*, made in 1962. This film was, as its companion piece *HUSH...HUSH*, *SWEET*

\*Certain names pop up again and again, often in circular patterns. *DIABOLIQUE* was based on a novel by Boileau and Narcejac, who also wrote the original novel which was made two years later as *VERTIGO* by Hitchcock, two years before he delivered *PSYCHO*. Thus there does seem to exist a concrete, if roundabout relationship between these two seminal works.



Top: Simone Signoret in Henri-Georges Clouzot's *DIABOLIQUE* (1955), a seminal film in the horror of personality genre based on a novel by Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac. Bottom: Phil Carrey gives young Anita Ekberg a Rorschach test in *SCREAMING MIMI* (1958), a film which contained many of the same ideas as *PSYCHO*, but in a less integrated form.

*CHARLOTTE*, directed by Robert Aldrich. The reviews of *BABY JANE* were on the whole much better than of *SWEET CHARLOTTE*; but in even the laudable reviews, there was a general tendency to dismiss the films as only horror films, as grand guignol—as if a horror film could not be worth serious consideration. Actually, the contribution of Robert Aldrich to the horror of personality films cannot be overestimated. There does arise here the question of auteur vs. genre: it seems to me that while Aldrich is most probably an auteur, it is equally obvious that he is an auteur working within and against certain genre conventions (just as Curtis Harrington was to do later in *GAMES*, and *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?*). It does not seem that these two approaches—auteur and genre—need necessarily be antagonistic. The reason I believe Aldrich was so important to the development of the genre is because it seems it was he and his scriptwriter Lukas Heller (and of course the novelist Henry Farrell) who realized the relevance of *DIABOLIQUE*, and in *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?* joined the major ideas of *DIABOLIQUE* and *PSYCHO*. What emerged then was a psychological study of two women whose relationship was based on some past crime, yet a study which dealt very overtly with the ambiguity of insanity. After combining these two basic premises, Aldrich went on to more or less invent his own conventions—conventions that he would follow very carefully in his next film, and conventions that would be followed just as carefully in some of the Curtis Harrington films years later. (Why is it that when Greek tragedy follows conventions and repeats itself it is intellectual, but when a horror film follows conventions it is too often regarded as clichéd repetition?) The first major element that Aldrich added is his use of the audience's awareness of his actors. He cast in his films aging movie stars. The sight of a bizarre Bette Davis making her comeback by torturing Joan Crawford, whom she has always disliked, adds an extra dimension to *BABY JANE* that fits right in with its tone: a poignancy, mixed with voyeurism and revulsion. In *HUSH...HUSH*, *SWEET CHARLOTTE* Aldrich goes even further: he uses four aging actresses—Olivia de Havilland, Bette Davis, Agnes Moorehead, and Mary Astor. Particularly effective is Mary Astor: although the audience may remember her as the beautiful girl in *THE MALTESE FALCON*, all the audience sees is a bloated, wrinkled, pale woman who is half-dead when we first see her. Surely this cannot be the Mary Astor we once knew so well. But of course time stops for no one, and everyone must get old, and so it seems, ugly. In each film Aldrich also casts Victor Buono, certainly a rather bizarre actor. In the first film he plays a grotesque mamma's boy, and in the second, father to the grotesque pappa's girl. Perhaps the most important difference between *DIABOLIQUE* and the Aldrich films is the distance Aldrich puts between the main crime and his story. In *DIABOLIQUE* the narrative was extremely simple: a "crime" was committed, and the story proceeded immediately from there. In both *BABY JANE* and *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, a crime is committed, and then the narrative jumps ahead about thirty years to continue the story. And this jump is not merely a structural manoeuvre, but also a thematic one: while the tragedy of *DIABOLIQUE* is a specific one and of a specific time, the tragedy of the Aldrich films includes the horror of completely wasted lives. Although *BABY JANE* and *SWEET CHARLOTTE* work within Aldrich's very tight framework much like a musical theme and variation, each film is a remarkably integrated work unto itself.

The first thing we hear in *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?* is a girl crying and a voice saying, "Want to see it again little girl? It shouldn't frighten you." The sound of tears, the







Scenes from the horror of personality films of Robert Aldrich. Top: Joan Crawford and Bette Davis from *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?* (1962). Middle: Davis dances with Bruce Dern in a dream sequence from *HUSH...HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE* (1964). Bottom: Aldrich talks with Agnes Moorehead during the filming of *HUSH...HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE* (1964).

immediate suggestion that *BABY JANE* will be a tragedy, is particularly apt. We are then introduced to the two sisters, Blanche and Jane. From the very beginning, the little girl Jane (the Bette Davis character) is flamboyant, while Blanche (the Joan Crawford character) is sullen. The highlight of the 1917 episode is a close-up of the Joan Crawford character as her mother tells her, "You're the lucky one Blanche. Someday you'll be the famous one...and you can treat your sister kinder than she's been treating you." And then from Blanche, very coldly, "I won't forget." We then skip to the year 1935. The roles have been reversed, and Joan Crawford is the famous actress, Bette Davis the untalented sister. Yet it appears that Joan Crawford is treating her sister very kindly, and exerting her influence to get Bette Davis some parts. However, Aldrich inserts touches which in retrospect suggest the true nature of Joan Crawford. When a studio executive walks past Crawford's big car, he asks, "What do they make monsters like this for?" And the answer is, "For Blanche Hudson." And not: for Baby Jane. Thus, Joan Crawford is very clearly equated with a monster. The climax of the pre-credit sequence is the very confusing presentation of the accident: we see close-ups of feet, of a light dress against a fence, a hand shifting gears, a crash. Later we are to take it for granted that Bette Davis ran over Joan Crawford. Yet what image does Aldrich provide us with as a metaphor for the accident? A Baby Jane doll with its head crushed. And indeed, it is Baby Jane (who always dresses in light colors) who is the victim. In retrospect it is amazing how many clues Aldrich provides us with which we go right ahead and ignore. Finally we get to the credits, and then the bulk of the story starts with the title: yesterday. We are prepared for the introduction of the aged Joan Crawford and Bette Davis by first watching the neighbors discuss them while watching an old Blanche Hudson movie (Joan Crawford in *SADIE MCKEE*, 1934). Although *BABY JANE* is unlike both *PSYCHO* and *DIABOLIQUE* in that the crime does not seem to have been sexually related, there is a remarkable emphasis on off-balance sexuality. The neighbors, played by Anna Lee and Bette Davis' real-life daughter, are never shown with men; neither is Joan Crawford. The only suggestion of a relationship is that between Bette Davis and Victor Buono, but it is presented as a gross parody, a grotesque. (Note that in *HUSH...HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE*, that element is provided by Cecil Kellaway, and it becomes, unlike in *BABY JANE*, affirming.) And indeed, our first view of Victor Buono standing with his tiny possessive mother suggests the Diane Arbus of the seventies. Certainly the relationship between these two is not normal. Notice too the homage to the seminal film *PSYCHO*, in that the name of the neighbor is Mrs. Bates.

Although the basic situation of the story seems to be that Bette Davis is the crazy and evil one, and Joan Crawford the suffering, good, and sane sister, Aldrich constantly throws in details which foreshadow the ending and suggest otherwise. Our first view of the aged Joan Crawford is that of her kindly sweet face suddenly becoming harsh as she criticizes an old movie director. Suggestively, it is Bette Davis who wears light colors, and Joan Crawford who wears black. For someone who is supposed to be crazy and evil, Bette Davis shows remarkable intelligence. She realizes that Joan Crawford called the business manager, and accuses her rightly of lying to her: "You're just a liar. You always were." The revelation that Bette Davis' whole life was wasted because of Joan Crawford's lying adds particular irony to the accurate accusation. Not only is Bette Davis intelligent, but she has a sense of humor that truly draws us toward her. "It's not me that needs a doctor, Blanche..." says Davis: or after partic-



# THE HORROR OF PERSONALITY DIRECTORS

# ALDRICH

## Robert Aldrich discusses WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE? and HUSH...HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE.

The office of Robert Aldrich is located in Los Angeles, one block south of the Melrose Paramount Studio. Masculine and tasteful, Aldrich's office is decorated with displays of his films and other curios. "I like Bette Davis and I like Joan Crawford," says a matinee matron in a New Yorker cartoon on the wall. "But I don't know if I like Bette Davis and Joan Crawford together!" Aldrich emerges from his office, a large, jovial, and instantly likeable man who is in his mid-fifties and has the most remarkably long and owlish eyebrows. In his inner office I choose a large black easychair from which to conduct the interview, and he chooses its matching overstuffed sofa under a huge and hauntingly evocative oil painting of Kim Novak as Lylah Claire.

CFQ: How did you first get interested in doing WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?

ALDRICH: A lady named Geraldine Hersey had been my English secretary on TEN SECONDS TO HELL and THE ANGRY HILLS. When I was in Africa doing SODOM AND GEMORRAH I got this long letter from her and an English publication, *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*—a hardback. No one had ever heard of its author Henry Farrell—at least I hadn't. I read it and was fascinated. I went through all the problems of trying to find out who owned it and who the author was. Lo and behold, the publication rights were owned in America, the author wasn't an Englishman but rather a Hollywood screenwriter, and the movie rights had already been purchased by another Hollywood screenwriter named Harry Essex. So consequently the price for that material had skyrocketed in terms of the commodity market, but I wanted it very badly. At that time the honeymoon was still on between Joe Levine and myself—because he was very happy with SODOM AND GEMORRAH and had already sold a lot of it to England and made lots of money, so he and I bought it together, and we collectively employed Lukas Heller as the screenwriter. Subsequently I wrote to Bette Davis, whom I had never met.

CFQ: Did Davis have any initial hesitation about doing the movie?

ALDRICH: In those days it was much more difficult to induce Bette Davis to do a picture, and she had never done a picture of that kind before. Davis was a very proud lady about her talent, and rightfully so. Therefore, I was very apprehensive about her willingness to be in the movie. So I took a lot of time composing a letter that was arrogant, but I thought necessarily so, saying that if this isn't the best screenplay you've ever read, don't do the picture, but if it is, I'd like an appointment and I'll come to New York to see you. About a month went by and then I got a very long, very polite, but very aloof letter from Miss Davis saying that no, it wasn't the best screenplay she had ever read, but that it came close. She'd be delighted to meet with me, but didn't know if she'd want to make the picture or not. So I came to New York two or three weeks after that and met with Davis and her lawyer. They were ter-

ribly hospitable and friendly, and Davis asked only professional questions. At the end of the three or four-hour conversation she said: "Fine, if the economics can be resolved, I'd like to do it." I don't think I talked to Crawford first. I had already done a picture with her, AUTUMN LEAVES, and we had a very good relationship, so I had reason to believe I could get her. We had some billing problems, but everyone was eventually satisfied.

CFQ: Did the two of them have any problems on the set?

ALDRICH: Not on BABY JANE. They obviously didn't like each other, but they were totally professional and ladylike. Any comments about one or the other they would reserve for the privacy of their own dressing room when the other one wasn't around.

I was very careful and very fair. I had to be objective in terms of getting the best picture. I think it would be unwise to give either of those ladies an edge, but they were totally professional on BABY JANE.

CFQ: It seems that one of your abilities is to cast expertly. Lots of directors engage in the old trick of casting against the grain and then getting applause. In most of your films you consistently cast with the grain and use the actor's own persona as an integral part of the character.

ALDRICH: Many people don't quite understand because they think this kind of casting invades the province of the writer. But since you're in an art or craft that has to do with communication, if the audience through their evaluation of whom the actor is playing the part can understand the character, you can telescope ten pages of the script because the audience will instantly know who the character is, how he behaves, where he comes from, what his background is, etc. I don't say that the other concept doesn't work, but it doesn't work for me.

In BABY JANE, we thought that if you made a movie about the periphery of Hollywood which had something to do with the ancient Hollywood, and you put in two stars who were getting old, people would read into that picture a secret show-biz mythology, almost a nostalgia. The audience feels that they are privy to real-life secrets about Crawford and Davis.

CFQ: How close did you work with Lukas Heller, the screenwriter?

ALDRICH: We're very close. We've done lots of pictures together. You always buy the material first and then do your overlay—that is, you write a long position paper on what's wrong with the material and what you want to do with it. Then you come in and the writer reads the overlay and the material, and then you argue—you pretend to discuss—why you think you're right and why he thinks he's right. The final result is usually a combination of both.

CFQ: How faithful are you to the script? I get a strong impression that your movies come out exactly as the script has been written, that it has all been worked out with extreme care.

ALDRICH: I think that's true because on those pictures we rehearsed: three weeks on BABY JANE, two weeks

on CHARLOTTE. What you see in the film is not necessarily what you see in the script, but it is what you saw at the end of those weeks of rehearsal. In other words, actors—as much as you may dislike them—quite often contribute, especially someone as talented as Davis. "I don't think I'd say that. Wouldn't I say this instead?" etc. Probably she'd say something in between. The script may veer 90 degrees in rehearsal. You also find that it has holes. I can work with Heller because he's English, and English writers don't have the ego problem of American writers. They come prepared to submerge their pride in ownership for the welfare of the project. So they don't mind if at the end of the rehearsal period you say, "This doesn't work, this doesn't structure, go back and in an hour come back with another version." What happens at the end of the rehearsal periods is you get a refined version of what you began with.

CFQ: Why after BABY JANE did you decide to make CHARLOTTE, basically a variation of the first film?

ALDRICH: I really had a marvelous relation with Davis and she hadn't done anything worthwhile in between. I had made a terrible picture with Henry Farrell called 4 FOR TEXAS, and he had this other book, not yet published which he brought to me. I sent it to Davis and she liked it. I thought it would be a marvelous vehicle for her. It really didn't disturb me, it would be different enough from BABY JANE so I couldn't be characterized as only a horror film director. CHARLOTTE is a bigger kind of movie, and the marketplace was very anxious for that kind of movie. In fact, Crawford was originally in the picture. They were counting on the re-teaming of Farrell, Crawford, Davis, Heller, and Aldrich, but hopefully it would be better, because the story was better.

CFQ: How did you decide on using de Havilland instead of Crawford?

ALDRICH: After Crawford got sick, the insurance company had an option to either cancel the picture or give us a short period of time to recast. Our position was that the whole reason for making the picture was to rejoin Crawford and Davis, so we couldn't just substitute anybody. The only person we could all agree on (Davis, Fox, and our company all had cast approval) was de Havilland and Hepburn. I had a strong feeling however, that Davis didn't really want Hepburn to do it, and I knew Hepburn would probably never do it, no matter what we offered her. So I went to Switzerland where de Havilland was living. She had some reluctance about doing it, because obviously she saw going to finish second to Davis. Unlike BABY JANE, CHARLOTTE is really a one vehicle picture, but she accepted.

CFQ: The other piece of casting that is exceptional is Mary Astor as Jewel. We are constantly aware of how beautiful she used to be, and the image of Astor now old and bloated is mythically and mysteriously sad.

ALDRICH: I have a hunch that was also Davis' idea, and Mary was brilliant. Our problem was convincing her to do it. She had just published a very successful book and had found a whole

new life for herself. Both Davis and de Havilland had been under contract at Warners when she had, and they were very close friends, so they helped to convince her.

CFQ: In BABY JANE we finally see that Baby Jane is really not the guilty one. In CHARLOTTE we discover that Charlotte is not really crazy. The motif of the character who is in some way a misfit, outside the mainstream of society, who can exhibit more sense and humanity than others, is your theme.

ALDRICH: Well, I've always thought that these people were normal, and the society outside them weren't. There is a theme I always look for. It comes from THE BIG KNIFE when Jack Palance says to his agent, "Struggle Charlie, you may still win a blessing." It has to do with man's intention to try to contain and manipulate his own destiny. It's the struggle that counts. A movie is about what high school coaches with no talent tell their teams: "This is character-building." And the struggle must change and develop the character. Movies aren't about winning. Football is about winning. Movies are about how people cope with losing or at least try to get a draw in life.

CFQ: Do you like unhappy endings?

ALDRICH: I don't really. I'd love to do a comedy, but can't get anybody to let me. I'm really a very funny fellow...but no one else thinks so. Most of my pictures have very funny things. I don't look for unhappy endings, but I don't think much of life ends happily. And since I try to make films that are reasonably truthful, chances are they'll end unhappily.

CFQ: Will you do more in horror?

ALDRICH: I know that I had wanted to do a take-off—not a put-down—of Dracula. And I couldn't get anyone interested. But, obviously, now it's too late. The French have made it. Brooks has made *Frankenstein*. Actually there are two coming out, Warhol made one. But two years ago I knew that was going to be the next breakthrough.

CFQ: I can't discuss horror without asking about THE EXORCIST?

ALDRICH: I thought I had an outside chance to direct that picture—for about fifteen seconds. Before Friedkin was hired, Blatty had a terrible argument with Warner Bros and was thinking of pulling the property away from them. I talked to him about buying the property but I'm sure he didn't take it seriously because he needed a lot of money and I didn't have a lot of money.

Everyone in Hollywood is disturbed about THE STING, because it won the Academy Award over THE EXORCIST, but they shouldn't be, because if they had any brains they wouldn't take the Academy seriously. The two films are not even in the same league.

I do think they show the movie in the last three minutes though. I don't think the audience understands the interior relationships and the exchange the devil makes—that is, the life of the child for Father Karras. I have many quarrels with the picture, but that may be envy.

Interview conducted by Charles Derry, May 1974.



# THE HORROR OF PERSONALITY DIRECTORS

# CASTLE

## William Castle discusses **HOMICIDAL** and **STRAIGHT-JACKET** and his fifties horror films.

William Castle has become uniquely identified with horror films over the years. While many disdain or dismiss his work as a serious contribution to the genre, most should be willing to admit that Castle is a filmmaker who knows how to entertain. We spoke via a special telephone hookup arranged by Paramount Pictures, where Castle is preparing his next film for release, a horror film of course, called **SHANKS**, starring the unique talents of Marcel Marceau. Castle has a friendly manner not unlike the quality which comes across in his brief screen appearances. One senses from him an unselfconscious desire to serve the audience and an instinctual grasp of showmanship. About **THE EXORCIST** he said: "I went to that five times—twice to see the picture, the other times I watched the audience."

**CFQ:** There is a sense of "fun" to your fifties horror films. Were you trying to accomplish anything else in these films?

**CASTLE:** I get calls from all over the United States today, in fact I get letters from all over the world, from students who are studying film and have taken these films and are looking for hidden meanings. It's a very strange thing. I definitely feel that possibly in my unconscious I was trying to say something. Many of my films are being taken very seriously today at the universities where they study them. I never expected that they would put under a microscope pictures that I made in the fifties and sixties and look for hidden meanings. Nevertheless, that's what is happening.

One of the questions I had from one of the students who called me from one of the universities was 'when you were doing **STRAIGHT-JACKET** with Joan Crawford and she stepped off the train and the smoke enveloped her and just completely fogged her out, was the feeling that you were trying to get that she was going back to the fetus position in her mother's womb? Is that true?' You know, you didn't want to say that actually it was merely that you were trying to make time and the smoke didn't work. And I think about inner meaning, truly, it is possible that deeply buried within my unconscious was the feeling of trying to say something. And I get this from **THE TINGLER**, where they say 'was it my cry against war and was it anti-establishment?' Many, many times, possibly without really knowing what I was doing, I hit upon a nerve. I think it's very much the same thing they're seeing in W. C. Fields. 'Was he anti-establishment?' Well, W. C. Fields was a character and whether he was 'anti-establishment.' I don't think it ever occurred to him. But I think within the scope of what he was doing, today he appears 'anti-establishment.' And it's the same with Laurel & Hardy. They were just doing comedies, but they prick a nerve today in our society. It's the same with the Marx Brothers. It's the same with the little horror films I made. They all have something, and the meanings are far more sophisticated today, and are looked for much more

deeply. But that's our audience.

**CFQ:** How did the success of **PSYCHO** affect **HOMICIDAL**?

**CASTLE:** I was accused of aping Hitchcock on **HOMICIDAL**. Time magazine reviewed the film in 1962 and said it was better than **PSYCHO**. Whether it was or not is up to the audience to decide, not to me. They said it was a more original piece and is much more exciting.

I must say that in those days I was very deeply a Hitchcock-lover, as I still am, and I was very deeply influenced by Mr. Hitchcock. I didn't go and deliberately try to copy **PSYCHO**, because **HOMICIDAL** is altogether a different story, but it had the same shocking ingredients. There were similarities but they are not that great. We both had a gimmick, and I think that was where I tried to beat Hitchcock. His gimmick on **PSYCHO** was a great piece of showmanship. I believe the picture lasted for about an hour and fifty minutes, and during that time no one was allowed into the theatre. You had to wait in line if you came in five minutes after the picture started, or a half-hour, or whatever. You were allowed to buy a ticket, but you had to wait outside. Not until the picture was over, was the new audience let in. I was surprised, but the contract that the theatres and the distributor had stated that this was a fact, and it was policed. I waited in line in New York for a half-hour. But I thought this fabulous, that people actually waited out in line as long as two hours to get in. It was an amazing thing, very much like **THE EXORCIST** today.

I felt I'd have to do something to top Mr. Hitchcock and have something more provocative as far as a gimmick was concerned, and I think I did it with my 'fright break.' The 'fright break' was in the last 60 seconds of the film where my voice would be on screen saying: 'Ladies and gentlemen, this is William Castle. You are cordially invited, if you're too frightened to see the last 60 seconds, to be my guest and go to the boxoffice and get your full admission price refunded.' That, in itself, was quite a daring statement to make, because there were big houses then with two or three thousand people. And outside we actually refunded money at the last minute at a display we called 'The Coward's Corner.' Very few people did go out, some just to see if we would indeed pay the admission price, and others would leave their girlfriends or boyfriend in the theatre and collect the one admission. But in a full house it was 100% at most.

**CFQ:** What do you think accounts for the off-kilter sexuality in these films?

**CASTLE:** I didn't have any in mine. They were pure fun. Are you talking about **PSYCHO**?

**CFQ:** The transvestism in **HOMICIDAL**, for instance.

**CASTLE:** You got transvestism. I wasn't allowed to do that. I had to have it masqueraded, you know. But who am I kidding?

**CFQ:** In comparison to your earlier horror films, **HOMICIDAL** seems to be more sophisticated. Were you striving for something more than just scaring

your audience?

**CASTLE:** Oh yes. I was growing up at the time. You know, as one grows and does more and more films, one becomes a little more sophisticated. I was trying really to do a real shocker on an intellectual plane.

**CFQ:** Eugenie Leontovich and Jean Arless give fascinating performances in the film. Did you consider trying to get bigger names?

**CASTLE:** I didn't have the money. I was the name behind the picture. That is the reason I associated myself so closely with my own films. I was the star because I had no choice. I had to have somebody that I could get before the public and as a result I used my own name and it caught on and I became the star of my own films.

**CFQ:** How do you feel about the success of the two Arless personas in the film?

**CASTLE:** That's very interesting and a whole story in itself. That would make a book. I wanted to use a complete unknown because if any of the audience recognized the character that was playing the two parts it would spoil it because they would then know it was either a man or a woman. If I picked a woman—say if I picked Bette Davis to do it, they'd know it was Bette Davis and it wasn't a man. Or if I picked a leading actor they would say that's an actor doing it, he's dressed up as a girl. So therefore I had to get somebody who was completely unknown to motion picture audiences in order to pull this stunt. I got a girl who was completely unknown and I changed her name to Jean Arless. I made up the name Jean because it's ambiguous, you don't know whether it's a boy or a girl. I transformed this girl, who was a very beautiful girl, into a boy. We cut her hair, we had false appliances made for her mouth to change its structure, we changed her nose, and did everything we could to give her face a masculine appearance. She did all the scenes involving the boy first and, in effect, became the boy really off-screen as well as on it, and then did a transformation completely and became very feminine as the girl. She wore a wig over the cut hair, becoming a very feminine, delightful lady. The two parts of her—the two Ids—were constantly at war with one another. It took a long time for this girl to get over this double transformation and for a long time she didn't know what she was. People didn't know. Even to this day when they see the picture on television or in a re-release, they'll ask was it a boy or a girl? At the end of the picture, you'll remember, I had her come out and had him come out on a split screen, and they bowed to each other and bowed to the audience for a curtain call.

**CFQ:** Was that double curtain call your idea?

**CASTLE:** Yes. And people would argue outside, was it indeed a girl or was it a boy? And I had a lot of fun with that because I never really told what it was.

**CFQ:** **STRAIGHT-JACKET** seems to show the influence of **WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE**? To what extent were you influenced by that film?

**CASTLE:** I was influenced by it, on

two accounts. I think that Bob Aldrich is a very fine talent. I saw **BABY JANE** and I was amazed at the business it was doing, and I was also amazed at really how good the film was. I was amazed at seeing two great superstars play in this shocker—one Bette Davis, one Joan Crawford. It was just an amazing phenomena. I saw it three or four times and I said I must do a film with either de Havilland or Crawford or Davis, because they're fabulous. I developed **STRAIGHT-JACKET** from an idea of my own. While it was in no way the same story, we used half of the starred team of Crawford and Davis, we used Crawford. The film, I think, did more business than **BABY JANE**. It was one of my most successful films.

**CFQ:** In **STRAIGHT-JACKET** we have what appears to be one of your favorite devices—the hatchet murder. Are you particularly fond of this?

**CASTLE:** No. As a matter of fact, where else is it shown in any of my pictures?

**CFQ:** In **HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL** you have the woman using an axe.

**CASTLE:** Oh yes. It's always a good gimmick, you know. For **STRAIGHT-JACKET** I got the springboard from Lizzie Borden. From the Lizzie Borden murders I devised a woman and her problem with that axe. I'm not axe-happy.

**CFQ:** The career of Joan Crawford was somewhat revitalized by **WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE**? How was Joan Crawford to work with on **STRAIGHT-JACKET**?

**CASTLE:** Oh God, Joan Crawford is one of the great, great stars of any time. She is disciplined, she is dedicated, she is marvelous to work with. She's the best star I've used in any of my pictures, outside of Vincent Price. I resurrected his career too. It was starting on **HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL** and during **THE TINGLER** that got him going with the AIP films. I think he's never stopped since then. But, getting back to Joan Crawford, she was marvelous. As a matter of fact, I did another film with her as soon as I could, a picture that I like and one of my best, **I SAW WHAT YOU DID**.

**CFQ:** Do you feel that crazy people are more horrifying than monsters like Frankenstein?

**CASTLE:** Not necessarily. It's a different technique. One is horror, the other is shocker. Of course, I have my own definition of horror, and I have my own definition of the thriller. Hitchcock makes thrillers and shockers. I make both. A horror picture is taking a monster and having the audience scream or be frightened by this monster—**GODZILLA**, **THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON**. A thriller or a shocker involves an identifiable person that you might be—a girl in jeopardy, or somebody in trouble—that the audience roots for or identifies with. So there is a difference between the shocker and the horror piece. I get very frightened of people rather than monsters. I think people are more fun to work with than monsters anyway.

Interview conducted by Dan R. Scapertotti, June 1974.



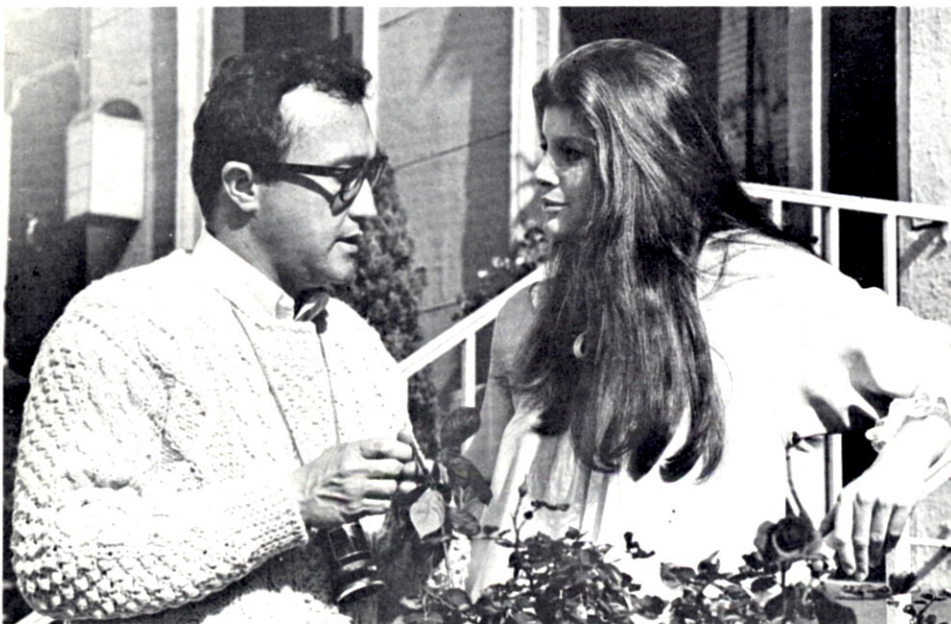
Scenes from the horror of personality films of William Castle. Top: Jean Arless as the killer in *HOMICIDAL* (1961), a sexually ambiguous figure appearing in dual male/female roles. The film was inspired by the success of *PSYCHO*. Bottom: Joan Crawford in a nightmare sequence from *STRAIGHT-JACKET* (1963), a story of axe-murder inspired by the success of *BABY JANE*.

ularly frightening her sister, "You're just a neurotic." And there is the whole business of the surprise dinner with the dead rat, which although horrible, shows amazing creativity. The innuendo "By the way, Blanche, there's rats in the cellar" is hilarious. Funny too is her baby-talk explanation "I didn't forget your breakfast...I didn't bring your breakfast...because you didn't eat your din-din." Joan Crawford, on the other hand, seems amazingly devoid of either wit or a sense of humor. But then again, she is after all the dark sister. The basic crisis in *BABY JANE* (just as it is in *SWEET CHARLOTTE*) is the question of the house. Since it was built for *BABY JANE* by her father, she doesn't want to leave it. (And in *SWEET CHARLOTTE* the house is again identified with the father figure). In the Aldrich films, the house is used very differently from the way it is used in some of the haunted house films. In some haunted house films, a girl is often tormented by nightmares and memories which she cannot exorcise until she returns to the house. In both *BABY JANE* and *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, it is quite clear that Bette Davis cannot exorcise her demons until she goes away from the house. Perversely, in both films Bette Davis wants to stay. Another important element which recurs in most of these films from *DIABOLIQUE* to *PSYCHO* to *SWEET CHARLOTTE* to *PRETTY POISON* is the disposal of the body sequence, although in *BABY JANE* there is a nice initial ambiguity as to whether Bette Davis is disposing of a body or her black-shrouded sister. It is not until the end of the film and outside the house in the light of a sunny beach that Joan Crawford finally tells Bette Davis the truth. After a life of self-torture Davis answers with a compassion that is horrifying: "You mean, all this time we could have been friends..." She goes off to try to rekindle the friendship by buying ice cream cones (and it was an ice cream cone she wanted in the pre-credit 1917 sequence). Almost magically, the grotesque makeup and wrinkles disappear from her face. She becomes truly beautiful; and with the guilt no longer heavy on her shoulders, her movements are light. Ironically, in her salvation she reverts back to her childhood. Yet just as Davis sheds guilt and years, Crawford takes them on. The movie ends with Bette Davis dancing a dance of liberation as she approaches the black corpse-like figure that is Joan Crawford. Despite the relatively happy ending, it is too late for the revelation to really matter. If only it had come decades sooner! The two sisters' lives have already been wasted; there is really no time left to make of them anything meaningful or worthwhile.

HUSH...HUSH, *SWEET CHARLOTTE* was made by Aldrich in 1964 and written by the same group of writers, Lukas Heller and Henry Farrell; and were it not for Joan Crawford's illness, Bette Davis would have again played opposite her. As it turned out, Olivia de Havilland stepped in and took Crawford's part. *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, like *BABY JANE*, starts in the past. The year is 1927, and almost immediately we get the strong father figure, played by Victor Buono. Even the father's portrait towers over the John Mayhew character. In this remarkably integrated film, one of the first icons we notice is a painting on a wall: Charlotte, her father, and probably her cousin—except Charlotte and her father are painted in bright colors that attract the eye, while the other girl is in dark colors that recede into the background. Thus the two girls' relationship should be discernable quite early. The crime, this time very overtly related to sexuality, is again handled in confusing and horrifying close-ups. The decapitation and the severing of the hand are clearly substitutions for castration. Immediately after the killing, Aldrich cuts to the bandleader who yells out "One more time." His remark may seem at first only terribly heavy-handed black comedy, but actually it is quite







Scenes from the horror of personality films of Curtis Harrington. Top: Debbie Reynolds and Shelley Winters in *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?* (1971). Middle: Katherine Ross and Simone Signoret in *GAMES* (1967). Bottom: Harrington and Katherine Ross during filming of *GAMES*. The genre often concentrates on the relationship of two main characters, usually women.

foreshadowing: before Charlotte can be "cured" she will have to go through the experience at least one more time. In many respects this suggests a clear relationship between these two Aldrich films and Hitchcock's *MARNIE*. In *MARNIE*, the heroine was forced to re-enact the crime (through the symbolic shooting of Forio); only then could she leave the house of her mother with no guilt. The same thing holds true in Aldrich's films. In *BABY JANE*, Jane cannot leave the house until she really has "tortured" her sister, as she supposedly had in the past. The parallel is even stronger in *SWEET CHARLOTTE* (in fact, the John Mayhew character is played by the parallel sailor in *MARNIE*, Bruce Dern). Before Charlotte can leave the house of her father, she must go through the experience of re-enacting the crime in the dream sequence and "shooting" Joseph Cotten. Yet the difference in attitude between *MARNIE* and the Aldrich films shows why *MARNIE* is not a horror film: *MARNIE* is really guilty of the past crime and is cured while she is relatively young. Baby Jane and Charlotte are not guilty, and they are not cured until their whole lives have been wasted, and it is too late. After the crime, the story jumps to 1964. Immediately, the problem of moving out of the house is made clear. Bette Davis pushes a gigantic flower pot off the second floor in an attempt to stop the bulldozers from razing her house. (At the end of the film, she will, quite symmetrically, throw the second and last flower pot off the second floor in order to execute de Havilland and Cotten.) The house is again bizarrely stopped in time; the Southern Gentility of 1927 now appears faded, run-down, but unchanged. When Olivia de Havilland first arrives she says, "It's just as I left it." And that was thirty-seven years ago. Ironically, Bette Davis had always wanted to play the archetypal Southern Belle Scarlett O'Hara. Now, in 1964, she managed to do just that—but decades too late: her Charlotte/Scarlet is a pathetic creature to behold; out of place, out of time, she wears clothes out of 1927, and treats even her best friend Velma, the maid, with a particularly Southern noblesse oblige. The contrast between the two cousins is obvious, for de Havilland has changed with the times, and is stylish and modern. It is obvious that Charlotte is at least a little insane, but in the horror of personality films, the supposedly insane exhibit an often remarkable insight. When Agnes Moorehead doubts that de Havilland will come, Bette Davis claims assuredly that she'll arrive the next day. And she does. And when de Havilland refuses graciously to help Davis keep the house, Davis accuses her of coming only to try to get her father's money—a fact which, again, turns out to be true. And when Charlotte talks about Jewel Mayhew and claims "she deserves to die," that too turns out to be accurate, for it was Jewel that had killed her husband in 1927. Indeed, Aldrich again gives us much information that suggests that Bette is not the treacherous, crazy one. When de Havilland hires some women to help pack, one admits that Charlotte "sure acts crazy some time—but I wouldn't bet on it." And when Charlotte throws her hate mail on the bed (all from de Havilland), one letter falls to the floor. Agnes Moorehead picks it up, and gives it to its sender Olivia de Havilland: it says "Murderess." The moment is absolutely electrifying in its truthfulness, and before long, de Havilland does murder Moorehead. The film is filled with many striking visual touches. When de Havilland talks about her old romance with Joseph Cotten, the outline of light on the pillar she is leaning against looks exactly like a wedding veil. They acknowledge that the romance had never worked out, and she moves into a more natural non-suggestive light. Or later when she is plotting with Cotten, she very casually turns off the light on Victor Buono's portrait. There are the billowing curtains, the close-up of footsteps,



## THE HORROR OF PERSONALITY DIRECTORS

# HARRINGTON

## Curtis Harrington discusses GAMES, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN? and WHO SLEW AUNTIE ROO?

Curtis Harrington lives in Hollywood Hills, in a nicely decorated house, furnished wisely and in good taste. On the wall is a French movie poster for his film *GAMES* which reads *DIABLE A 3* (The Devil At 3). Harrington himself is a pleasant, friendly person, whose films evidence a certain nostalgic sense of the macabre. He has worked ably in the horror of personality genre, and more consistently than any other director, of which his most recent theatrical feature, *THE KILLING KIND*, is an example.

**CFQ:** Do you think you are a typed director, typed as a director of mental anguish?

**HARRINGTON:** In the eyes of the motion picture industry, such as it is, I am probably "typed" as a director of horror films and thrillers. The concept, "director of mental anguish," is one that I'm afraid most producers in Hollywood wouldn't understand.

**CFQ:** What has been the extent of your involvement with your films?

**HARRINGTON:** HOW AWFUL ABOUT ALLAN was offered to me by George Edwards and Aaron Spelling. *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?* was a project I was deeply involved in from the time it was just a gleam in Henry Farrell's eye. It was Farrell's original story and screenplay, but I was deeply involved in its detailed development, and it was absolutely a project that I was instrumental in bringing about.

**CFQ:** How much of the writing do you do on your films?

**HARRINGTON:** I contributed conceptually to some of the writing of *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?* I co-wrote the original story of *GAMES*. The amount of writing I actually do varies tremendously from project to project. My preference is to work very closely with a writer on the development of a film that I want to do, since I do not consider myself to be a first-class writer—especially of dialogue, which I consider to be a special skill.

**CFQ:** In *GAMES* and *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?* would you say that you were working within and against genre conventions at the same time?

**HARRINGTON:** It's hard for me to think of them in those terms because I'm really more interested in using the genre to express my own interests. In *GAMES*, for instance, the whole concept goes back to what Henry James wrote, in which underlying it all is the story of the contrast between European decadence and American innocence. These are the elements I like to work with.

As far as I'm concerned, I have yet to make a horror film. I would like to make one. Horror films are usually of a more fantastic genre, in the tradition of *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*. Those, to me, are true horror films. What I have made are really psychological mystery stories.

Certainly I'm not unaware of the debt that *GAMES* owes to *DIABOLIQUE*. There are elements of horror in those films. I just wouldn't call them horror films. The whole idea of *GAMES* really

came about because of my intense admiration for the work of Josef Von Sternberg (*BLUE ANGEL*, *DEVIL IS A WOMAN*, *SHANGHAI EXPRESS*, *ANATOLIAN*, *BLONDE VENUS*). I very much wanted to create a latter day vehicle for Marlene Dietrich at the time. The only reason why she didn't play it was that the heads of the studio simply would not entertain the thought of her being in it. I was never even allowed to present the script to her. They felt she was not a star of current enough importance, whereas Simone Signoret was still considered to be much more of a current star.

**CFQ:** There is a rich, granular texture to *GAMES* that is very well realized. How was this achieved?

**HARRINGTON:** I had the good fortune to work with William Fraker, who is in many ways my favorite of all the cameramen I've worked with. This was his first film. Before this he was an assistant cameraman. Despite my visual orientation, I'm not a director who can tell the cameraman where to put the lights, but I certainly tell him in essence what I want, then they technically achieve it. The better the cameraman is, the less I have to say to him, and that was certainly the case with Bill Fraker.

**CFQ:** There was a diffused quality to the film. Was that done with both diffused filters and lighting?

**HARRINGTON:** Yes. We chose that as the style. I used that effect again very consciously in *THE KILLING KIND*. We used a Harrison fog filter on most work of greater or lesser density. In *GAMES*, it was portraying a kind of enclosed, hothouse world in which these people lived. *THE KILLING KIND* is my most realistic film, even though it deals with murder and obsessive personality, it really deals with the everyday. There is no exoticism in it whatsoever. There, I was trying to make an overall comment on the whole thing, which is ultimately, in a way, a kind of nightmare. I wanted that slight removal from reality, to put you in a more subjective world.

**CFQ:** What conscious connections do you find between *GAMES* and *DIABOLIQUE*?

**HARRINGTON:** Certain plot devices are the only main connections between the two. I wanted to do a story that would seem like a fantasy about a supernatural visitation that would be revealed as a hoax at the end, which was exactly what *DIABOLIQUE* was.

**CFQ:** How do you feel about *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?*

**HARRINGTON:** To me, the film was a very affectionate recreation of a period in Los Angeles history, which I have my own tremendous feelings of nostalgia for. I was trying to show lives on the fringe of Hollywood in the '30s, not within the industry. I had tremendous feelings of sympathy for both characters in the story.

**CFQ:** You never have all-white, all-black characters in your films. Like *Hitchcock*, you work for the shades of gray.

**HARRINGTON:** That to me is very important because I try to make my characters real rather than something

that is a matter for the author's convenience. Ambiguity of character and situation is something that intrigues me. I would love to do more Pirandellian themes because they fascinate me.

**CFQ:** How do you feel about the similarities in plot structure of the Horror of Personality films, including your own?

**HARRINGTON:** I do not look for such similarities, so these are the things that are after the fact. I think you find in the work of a great many artists that, in essence, they tend to say the same thing over and over again. This is not a bad or negative thing. It is up to the critic to attach whatever importance he wants to them. These may be unconscious resonances, and I think it is bad for anyone who works creatively to become aware of all this. I've always felt it was wrong for an artist to be psychoanalyzed. The one or two times that I've failed is when I've worked out something intellectually. I have to have a kind of gut feeling about what I'm doing, and just follow that.

**CFQ:** Your sense of nostalgia is strangely inverted. You're affectionate towards it, and yet rather critical of it. It can be comforting to live in the past, but also dangerous and even tragic, as *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?* and *THE KILLING KIND* show.

**HARRINGTON:** That was very much in Signoret's character in *GAMES* also. The whole nostalgia thing was ruthlessly used by her to pull that girl in. In the trunk scene, when she pulls out mementos from the past, she is using nostalgia to create a certain impression.

My nostalgia is really for periods in which I didn't live at all. I feel no nostalgia at all for the '40s, when I was young.

**CFQ:** Did you choose the title for *WHO SLEW AUNTIE ROO?*

**HARRINGTON:** No, certainly not. The film, while in production, was called *THE GINGERBREAD HOUSE*. This was an appropriate title and it was the title I gave the script. *WHO SLEW AUNTIE ROO?* was the producers' idea of a commercial title. It is my opinion that it harmed the commercial chances of the film. There is one cut in the film that was imposed by the producer—the abrupt end of the confrontation scene between Auntie Roo and her servant. I also did not approve of the casting of the actor who played the servant. That was also imposed by the producers.

**CFQ:** How did this project develop?

**HARRINGTON:** I was approached by American-International to do the film. Also, Shelley Winters, who had worked with me on *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?*, asked for me to direct her in it. It was not a project that I personally wanted particularly to do.

**CFQ:** Did you write any of it?

**HARRINGTON:** I did no actual writing on the film, though I did suggest some of the plot elements—especially the idea of Auntie Roo keeping the mummified body of her dead child, having been unable psychologically to bury her. Gavin Lambert contributed quite a bit of the dialogue.

The first draft of the script was laid

in the present day, and it was my idea to place it in the early '20s. I have a great fondness for all the imagery and quality of the traditional Victorian Christmas celebration. I tried to put as much as I could of that in the film. I added a great deal to it.

It was just a rather thin little fable. I found Shelley Winters's mad behavior vastly amusing, unlike Mr. Bartholomew's comments (see 2:32:26). I do feel that I had achieved the pathos of the situation at the end. There are an awful lot of moments in it that are purely filmic, that I did on the set.

**CFQ:** Where did you find the sinister house in which Auntie Roo lives?

**HARRINGTON:** The house was a real house at Shepperton Studios that ordinarily is used there as the main administration building. The facade of the house was completely revamped for the film by art director George Provis.

**CFQ:** Your concern with complex detail is striking, especially in *AUNTIE ROO* and *HELEN*. How much attention do you personally pay to art direction?

**HARRINGTON:** I gave a great deal of attention to art direction and set decoration. I am personally concerned with every prop. I give my people a general idea of what I want, then if I don't see what I want, I become even more specific.

**CFQ:** How long did it take you to shoot *AUNTIE ROO* and how much did it cost?

**HARRINGTON:** We had a forty day shooting schedule. I don't know the final cost, but I imagine it to be around \$800,000.

**CFQ:** You seem to work particularly well with Shelley Winters.

**HARRINGTON:** We seem to understand each other. She is sometimes a difficult, headstrong actress, but she is also extremely talented. She makes wonderful "choices" as an actress, and has an unerring sense of dramatic truth. The little displays of temperament are easy to cope with when you know you are getting something worthwhile on the screen.

**CFQ:** Are you satisfied with *AUNTIE ROO*?

**HARRINGTON:** I'm not wholly satisfied with any film I've made. I feel that I did just about the best I could do with *AUNTIE ROO*, however, under the circumstances. When I was younger, I felt that by the brilliance of style alone, a director could transform anything. I don't believe that anymore. You've got to have something to work with. This was brought home to me especially in relation to *WHOLESALE AUNTIE ROO*? It had a very weak, incredibly lousy script. Believe me, what I finally shot is an incredible improvement over the original. Even so, it was very difficult to do enough with it to make it work. I was also saddled with a very bad cameraman that I couldn't control. I still think that whatever flaws it had, it turned out astonishingly well, considering that it was a terrible uphill struggle for me all the way.

Interview conducted by Dale Winogura. June 1974. Portions are taken from correspondence with Stuart M. Kaminsky.



and then the corpse that comes alive that seem to be direct homages to the film that started it all. For me the most interesting visual idea in **SWEET CHARLOTTE** is Aldrich's photographing Olivia de Havilland through windows. The icon of the window seems a complex one; photographing someone through a window (especially with curtains) suggests that their true nature is inscrutable, hidden, and ultimately evil. I think immediately of the final window image of Bette Davis in William Wyler's **THE LITTLE FOXES**, or of the little boy in Robert Mulligan's **THE OTHER**. De Havilland (and never Charlotte) is photographed three times looking through a window: once when she arrives, a second time after she kills Agnes Moorehead, and a third time before she stages the elaborate masquerade with Joseph Cotten. Ultimately, de Havilland does not survive. When Bette Davis leaves the house triumphant, she is dressed in modern clothes and leaves her music box, the symbol of her past, behind her. Nevertheless, the attitude of the film can well be represented by a Mary Astor line: "Ruined finery" she says to Cecil Kellaway, "That's all I have left." And that is true: for in this genre, any finery must be ruined. It is not death so much that is horrible, but life. If it is already too late for Bette Davis and Mary Astor and Agnes Moorehead and Olivia de Havilland and for all of us, Mary Astor's poignantly expressed line, "This long disease, my life," works both as a voluntary metaphor and a reminder of the true horrible sense of life embodied by this genre.

Especially after **WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?**, Aldrich's first venture into the genre, and certainly after **HUSH... HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE**, his second, the genre became associated very directly with the old movie stars who were increasingly picking them as vehicles for their comebacks. For instance, **STRAIGHT-JACKET**, written by **PSYCHO**'s Robert Bloch and directed by William Castle, gave Joan Crawford the opportunity to be a suspected ax-murderess. This film follows roughly the same pattern as the Aldrich films: a crime in the past, the bulk of the story in the present, an emphasis on the relationship between two women (in this case, Diane Baker and Joan Crawford—daughter and mother), and the revelation that madness and guilt is much more complex than it had seemed. **LADY IN A CAGE**, directed by Walter Grauman in 1964 and starring Olivia de Havilland, was in many ways a departure from the genre. Although de Havilland is presented as a lady of leisure and not particularly sympathetic smothering mother, she is not for an instant considered either guilty or mad. Rather she undergoes a terrible torture when her house is invaded by an insane young gang led by James Caan and including a rotund Ann Sothern. What happens in the film is truly horrible; and no one—not even passing motorists or pedestrians—will stop to help her. **LADY IN A CAGE** is important for at least two reasons: first, it has a notable visual style unlike the heavy gothic expressionism of the previous films, a style which suggests the depth of visual detail which is to appear in the Curtis Harrington films. And second, it suggests the direction toward which the genre may be heading—that is, toward the very specific. This may be because **LADY IN A CAGE** is based on a true incident. Indeed, its plot, a lady's home is invaded senselessly and no one will help her—has really not the slightest bit of abstraction, and can be taken on a purely literal level as a representation of what in the 1960s seemed to be an increasing fear. As such, the film predates **THE BOSTON STRANGLER**, **IN COLD BLOOD**, **10 RILLINGTON PLACE**, **THE INCIDENT**, and most specifically and interestingly, the genre-oriented **TARGETS**.

Skipping ahead in time, **TARGETS** was made in 1968 by Peter Bogdanovich, and was based on the Charles Whitman killings at the University of Texas. Bogdanovich, a student of film history certainly, uses Boris Karloff as a representative of what the horror film used to be. Within the film, Karloff plays a gentle actor (Byron Orlok) who is a little out of his time. The main thrust of the story, however, is carried by the Bobby Thompson character who (and could there be a more basic sounding American name?) for no reason at all kills his wife, his mother, the delivery boy, and then snipes from atop a gas tank,

and then from a drive-in theatre, getting confused and stopping only when he is confronted both by Boris Karloff in the flesh and on the screen. The idea of one set of horror values (being embodied by Boris Karloff) confronting another set of horror values (that is, the horror of personality values embodied in the Bobby Thompson character) is particularly strong. Although Bobby Thompson is then apprehended, **TARGETS** can be looked at as a kind of wistful elegy for the kind of supernatural classic horror that is no longer as meaningful as it once was. Most clearly for Bogdanovich, the horror of 1968 rests in the mystery and incomprehensibility of Bobby Thompson, who, as he is being taken away says only, "I hardly ever missed, did I?" Bogdanovich does not try to explain Bobby Thompson: he even shuns any psychological conjecture. It was this one reticence that particularly bothered the critics. As Howard Thompson asked obsessively in the New York Times, "Why? This invariable question of today's headlines about the random sniper-murder of innocent people is never answered in **TARGETS**. This is the only flaw, and a serious one, in this original and brilliant melodrama... This one count simply can't be ignored... Why? How come?" Once again it seems a critic has missed the obvious point: were an explanation given we could rest easy with the insanity carefully catalogued. It is the very absence of any reason, the very refusal on the part of Bogdanovich to give us the slightest grounds for reassurance that makes **TARGETS** so disturbing. And it is the germ of **TARGETS** that can be seen in **LADY IN A CAGE**.

Another important film during the post-Kennedy assassination period when the genre flourished, was **THE NANNY**, directed by Seth Holt, and starring Bette Davis. In this film the question is again one of sanity and of a past crime. Though instead of using two women, Holt uses Bette Davis and a little boy. The climax (with its generic revelation) is simultaneously poignant and repulsive. A similar switch in the formula was made in **PRETTY POISON** (1968), in which the two protagonists were not two old women, but a young man and a girl in love. Beneath the film's obvious individuality, one can see that **PRETTY POISON** really works nicely within the framework of the horror of personality film. Anthony Perkins plays the supposedly insane character (and after all, haven't we learned from **PSYCHO** that the All-American boy is really crazy?); and Tuesday Weld plays the typical, luscious, All-American girl who is a sweet cheerleader with mother problems. Perkins has a crime in his past (having set his house and parents on fire), and has been in an institution. Only after years have passed does Perkins come out of the institution and the movie begins (like **BABY JANE** or **SWEET CHARLOTTE**, or **STRAIGHT-JACKET** in particular) with the pre-credit sequences telegraphed into traditional exposition. Yet as the film goes on, we discover the horrible truth: that Perkins, despite being quite decidedly weird, is not the crazy one; rather, it is sweet, nubile Tuesday Weld who is the crazy one. The revelation comes shockingly when Weld very easily kills a guard and then sits on his head in order to drown him. Is this what is happening to American youth? The film is made all the more horrifying, because like **TARGETS**, the actions of **PRETTY POISON** Tuesday Weld are not even explained psychologically—they are merely taken for granted. The irony is that after experiencing the horror and violence of a supposedly sane person, Perkins is quite content to go back to the institution—which he considers safe. And if it's safer to live in some kind of insane asylum, what does that say for the basic quality of human nature?

Another important development seems to have been Curtis Harrington's realization that he could work in the genre very well. **GAMES**, made in 1967, stars Simone Signoret in the same part and only slightly altered plot as in **DIABOLIQUE**. The power of the film derives most from the density of the visual images—especially the bizarre set decorations. Although there is not here the major question of the ambiguity of insanity, there is the emphasis on the relationship between two women, and the revelation that one (Simone, of course) is trying to drive the other one crazy. There is, however, one important difference between this and **DIABOLIQUE**. In **DIABOLIQUE**, Signoret was

sincerely in love with Vera Clouzot's husband. In **GAMES**, there is an added twist when Signoret kills James Caan; and Harrington's vision is revealed as if not more sordid, certainly more unsettling and bleak than Clouzot's. Harrington's ideas are continued in **HOW AWFUL ABOUT ALAN** (a variation in which Anthony Perkins is pitted against Julie Harris) and particularly in **WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?** In this 1971 film, sprightly Debbie Reynolds is pitted against the mad Shelley Winters. The film is, like **GAMES**, remarkably dense in its images: bizarre midgets, slaughtered rabbits, a little girl impersonating Mae West, a room full of girls tap-dancing in front of their disgusting mothers, etc. Like Aldrich's **BABY JANE**, **WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?** is concerned with Hollywood—and the portrait of Hollywood that emerges is grotesque and pathetic. For her straight dramatic role, Harrington lets Debbie Reynolds play a woman who runs away with Winters from the scandal of their children's crime and then starts a dance school that suggests the Mount Hollywood Art School in **SINGIN' IN THE RAIN**. In fact, the street and exterior of Debbie Reynolds' apartment in **HELEN** remarkably echo her street and apartment in **SINGIN' IN THE RAIN**. It seems that Harrington's intent is to show the underside of that film's Hollywood view; and indeed, **HELEN** does contain at least twenty minutes of singing and dancing. Unlike Aldrich's films, Harrington doesn't even use a nominally happy ending; and **HELEN** ends with the dead Debbie Reynolds propped up on stage as if to perform, and the dolly camera taking us (although we don't want to go) into a close-up of the now completely mad Shelley Winters. And it is a horror that not even the attempted relationship with Dennis Weaver can attenuate.

Other later films of the genre include **TWISTED NERVE** in 1968 which attempted to explain insanity by equating it with bad chromosomes; **WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO AUNT ALICE?** in 1969 which pitted old Geraldine Page against the old trooper Ruth Gordon, with the trooper getting killed; and **PLAY MISTY FOR ME** with Clint Eastwood as the normal one, and Jessica Walter as the incomprehensible psychopath who (almost?) kills a maid and tries to kill Eastwood.

Iconographically, the films of the genre can be divided roughly into three groups: weaponry, locations, and (for lack of a better term) identity symbols. First of all, the weaponry. Although the violence in these films is always portrayed with an amazing creativity, the weapons seem to be generally sharp instruments which are not at all exotic. In **SCREAMING MIMI**, **PSYCHO**, **HOMICIDAL**, and **WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?**, Anita Ekberg, Anthony Perkins, Jean Arless, and Shelley Winters respectively dispatch their victims with a knife. In **DEMENTIA 13**, **STRAIGHT-JACKET**, **TWISTED NERVE**, and **HUSH... HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE**, the weapon is an ax. Other variations include the pointed elevator part in **LADY IN A CAGE**, the sharp blade of a threshing machine in **WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?**, and the saber in **THE MAD ROOM**. The weapon which takes second place is certainly the blunt instrument—the weapon used in **WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?**, **HUSH... HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE**, and others. Other recurring weapons include fire (in **PYRO**, **WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO AUNT ALICE?**, **PRETTY POISON**, and **WHO SLEW AUNTIE ROO?**), and of course the occasional use of the gun. However it is interesting to note that the gun is most important in films like **TARGETS** which directly and very specifically reflect the fear of unexpected and matter-of-fact violence.

The second group of icons are the locations (and although I call the third group symbols, it is obvious that the locations in these films often work as metaphors). The most dominant location is, of course, the house. The house is almost always something frightening, something that is descended from the haunted house genre, but whose terrors are always specifically real rather than mystical. It is the house which contains the dead Mrs. Bates in **PSYCHO**, the memorabilia in **WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?**, and the suggestion of a once thriving South in **HUSH... HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE**. It is the house in films from **GAMES** to **THE MAD ROOM** to **WHO**



Top: Olivia de Havilland as the LADY IN A CAGE (1964), marking the beginning of a trend in the horror of personality genre toward the literal and specific. Bottom: Carl Boehm and Moira Shearer from PEEPING TOM (1961), a clear example of the use of icons as personality symbols. Here, the camera, lights and movie screen represent Boehm's voyeuristic obsession.

SLEW AUNTIE ROO? that reflects the insanity so central to the story. Usually the house is a dead thing, containing memories, corpses, or reminders of an old way of life. The horror usually arises because while the times change, the house and its occupants do not—such as in *BABY JANE*, *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, *AUNTIE ROO*, and *PSYCHO*. There seem to be three particular locations within the house that take on individual importance. First of all, the emphasis in these films on stairways cannot be overemphasized. In *PSYCHO*, the detective is killed on the stairway. In *BABY JANE*, two of the most important scenes take place there: Joan Crawford trying to get to the telephone, and Bette Davis killing the maid. In *THE PSYCHOPATH*, the villainess falls down the stairs and is killed. In *THE HAUNTING*, Julie Harris is almost killed by the spiral staircase jiggling as she tries to discover the mystery of the house and find Richard Johnson's wife. In *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, Agnes Moorehead is killed by Olivia de Havilland and falls down the snake-like staircase; and later, as Bette Davis tries to get to her room, she is finally driven crazy as she crawls down the stairway backwards. And in *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?*, the outside rickety stairway works equally as a focal point of the horror. There is a sense in which the stairway works as a gateway between two separate domains. In *PSYCHO* it takes us from the normal to the sick world of Anthony Perkins. In *BABY JANE*, it takes us from the crazy domain of Bette Davis to what seems the more reasonable domain of Joan Crawford. In *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?* it works the same way. In fact, there is a particularly horrifying scene in *HELEN* in which the sane Debbie Reynolds comes down the stairway into the mad Shelley Winters domain and discovers the butchered rabbits. In this film, the stairway separates the two domains: mad from sane. In some of the other films, especially *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, the use of the stairway is more complicated: for instance, although it would seem that the mad domain would be the upstairs room of Bette Davis, all the crazy goings-on take place in the front floor, the supposedly sane domain. The end of *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, with the revelation that de Havilland is really a villainess and that Charlotte is, for all her problems remarkably sane, makes it clear why the "mad portion" of the film never took place in the upstairs domain of Bette Davis, but rather in Olivia's—with the climaxes taking place on the stairway. Although complicated, the stairway remains a tenuous gateway, a gateway which when crossed over is always terrifying, and for someone usually fatal. The two other locations in the house which are particularly important are the bathroom and the basement. The bathroom's importance is easy to understand: it is the room of the house that is the most personal, the room which is used to cleanse the body, to make it pure. Hence, whenever violence takes place in this room, it is particularly obscene and upsetting. There is the bathtub scene in *DIABOLIQUE*, the famous shower murder in *PSYCHO*, the orgy in *LADY IN A CAGE*, the image of a vulnerable Glynis Johns in a bathtub in the 1962 loose remake of *THE CABINET OF CALIGARI*, Samantha Eggar being tied next to the bathtub in *THE COLLECTOR*, and the horrible "drowning in a bathtub" scene in *THE NANNY*. The recurring cellar image is probably related to the womb and/or darkness. Thus we have the irony of Anthony Perkins putting his mother in the womb of the house in *PSYCHO*, or of Tallulah Bankhead in her little underground dungeon in *DIE! DIE! MY DARLING!* Perhaps the best example, one that clearly unites the idea of the cellar with the perverted sexuality is that of *THE COLLECTOR*, in which Terence Stamp kidnaps Samantha Eggar and deposits her in a little underground apartment. Aside from the house, the other main lo-







Top: Little Elizabeth Dear witnesses the stabbing of her father by her mother (Isla Cameron) in *NIGHTMARE* (1964). Middle: A victim of *THE PSYCHOPATH* (1966)—the knife is a weaponry convention of the genre. Bottom: Tuesday Weld shoots her mother (Beverly Garland) as Anthony Perkins looks on in *PRETTY POISON* (1968). Seemingly normal, Weld commits insane acts.



cation that continually appears is the mental institution, a location whose literalness needs no explanation: institutions appear in *MANIAC*, *STRAIGHT - JACKET*, *THE NANNY*, *SHOCK TREATMENT*, *SCREAMING MIMI*, *THE CABINET OF CALIGARI*, *NIGHTMARE*, and *PRETTY POISON*.

The last group of icons that appears with regularity are the identity symbols. These are all objects that reflect on the characters' identity and (in)sanity. For instance, there are the photographs and paintings in *BABY JANE*, *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, *DIE! DIE! MY DARLING!*, *REPULSION*, and *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?*; the mirrors in *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, and *REPULSION*; the movie screen and camera in *BABY JANE*, *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?*, and *PEEPING TOM*; the recurring windows in all the films; the statues in *SCREAMING MIMI*, and *GAMES*; and the birds in *PSYCHO*, the parakeet and rat in *BABY JANE*, and the rabbits in *HELEN*. The question of identity and sanity is presented especially succinctly in *SWEET CHARLOTTE*. When Charlotte opens the door in the dark and the photographer rudely takes her picture, she recoils—not only because of the shock, but because of the realization of what her identity really is. At the end of the film a photographer again asks for her picture—but this time she smiles, quite able to accept her identity now that her sanity is almost intact and the guilt off her shoulders. In *BABY JANE*, the crushed doll head works as a marvellous symbol for the sanity of Bette Davis. And in the same film the scream that Bette Davis gives out after seeing herself in the mirror is truly heart-rending. The discrepancy between self-concept and image, or ideal and reality is further illustrated by the shot in *BABY JANE* when the painting of a young Joan Crawford is juxtaposed over the Joan Crawford that looks like a corpse. Can there be any other group of movies in which identity symbols recur so consistently? Again, the concern with identity and sanity nicely mirrors the often heard sixties question: "Who am I?" It is the genre's answer to this question which is particularly disturbing.

Ironically, just as the various concerns of the fifties and sixties seemed to end the classic horror film, the spreading concerns with what seems to be a fear of the possible innate insanity and violence in man seems to be headed toward perhaps eradicating the clear distinctions between horror of personality films like *TARGETS* and what would seem to be non-horror films like *THE BOSTON STRANGLER*, *10 RILLINGTON PLACE*, *IN COLD BLOOD*, *DELIVERANCE*, *THE WILD BUNCH*, *STRAW DOGS*, *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*, and *DIRTY HARRY*. Horror films have always reflected man's deepest anxieties about himself. In the time where life, or at least man's awareness of it, seems to be increasingly horrible, it is most understandable that elements from the horror of personality films (violence, insanity) are now feeding into the mainstream. No longer are horror films (if they ever really were) escapist fare for children. Hopefully, critics will realize that the "strict" horror of personality films, films such as *PSYCHO*, *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?*, *HUSH...*, *HUSH*, *SWEET CHARLOTTE*, *PLAY MISTY FOR ME*, and *WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?*, films that have been previously dismissed or ridiculed as shocking, gory, silly, excessive, and violent, can, through considerations of genre, show as much about our society and be as artistic a statement on man's concerns and his nature as films like *STRAW DOGS* and *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*, works which largely because of their auteur considerations have already been accepted as worthy of study.



OCFQ



# THE HORROR OF PERSONALITY

# FILMOGRAPHY

This list includes the horror of personality films (indicated by an \*) discussed in this article, as well as those films that either influenced or were influenced by the genre. In the credits the D stands for director, S for screenwriter. A name in parenthesis indicates the author of the original source, when important.

1955

## \*DIABOLIQUE

D: Henri-Georges Clouzot. S: Henri-Georges Clouzot, Gerome Geronimi, Rene Masson, F. Grendel (Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac). With: Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, Paul Meurisse, Charles Vanel.

1958

## \*SCREAMING MIMI

D: Gerd Oswald. S: Robert Bleas. With: Anita Ekberg, Gypsy Rose Lee, Phil Carey, Harry Townes.

## SCREAMING SKULL

D: Alex Nicol. S: John Kneubuhl. With: John Hudson, Peggy Webber, Russ Conway, Nicol, Toni Johnson.

## I BURY THE LIVING

D: Albert Band. S: Louis Garfinkle. With: Richard Boone, Theodore Bikel, Peggy Maurer, Robert Osterloh.

## MACABRE

D: William Castle. S: Robb White. With: William Prince, Jim Backus, Ellen Corby, Christine White.

## TERROR IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE

D: Harold Daniels. S: Robert C. Dennis. With: Gerald Mohr, Cathy O'Donnell, William Ching, John Qualen.

## HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL

D: William Castle. S: Robb White. With: Vincent Price, Carol Ohmart, Elisha Cook Jr., Richard Long, Alan Marshal.

1959

## HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM

D: Arthur Crabtree. S: Aben Kandel, Herman Cohen. With: Michael Gough, June Cunningham, Shirley Anne Field.

## THE BAT

D: Crane Wilbur. S: Crane Wilbur (Mary Roberts Rinehart). With: Vincent Price, Agnes Moorehead, Gavin Gordon, John Sutton, Lenita Lane.

## THE TINGLER

D: William Castle. S: Robb White. With: Vincent Price, Judith Evelyn, Darryl Hickman, Philip Coolidge.

1960

## THE HYPNOTIC EYE

D: George Blair. S: Gitta and William Read Woodfield. With: Jacques Bergerac, Allison Hayes, Marcia Henderson.

## CIRCUS OF HORRORS

D: Sidney Hayers. S: George Baxt. With: Anton Diffring, Erika Remberg, Yvonne Monlaur, Yvonne Romain, Jane Hylton, Donald Pleasence.

## \*PSYCHO

D: Alfred Hitchcock. S: Joseph Stefano (Robert Bloch). With: Anthony Perkins, Vera Miles, John Gavin, Martin Balsam, John McIntire, Frank Albertson, Janet Leigh.

## 13 GHOSTS

D: William Castle. S: Robb White. With: Donald Woods, Charles Herbert, Jo Morrow, Rosemary De Camp.

## MANIA

D: John Gilling. S: Gilling, Leon Griffiths. With: Donald Pleasence, Peter Cushing, Ian Fleming. Originally THE FLESH AND THE FIENDS.

1961

## FRANTIC

D: Louis Malle. S: Louis Malle. With: Jeanne Moreau, Maurice Ronet. Originally ASCENSEUR POUR L'ECHEAFAUD.

## \*HOMICIDAL

D: William Castle. S: Robb White. With: Glenn Corbett, Patricia Breslin, Jean Arless, Eugenie Leontovich.

## \*SCREAM OF FEAR

D: Seth Holt. S: Jimmy Sangster. With: Susan Strasberg, Ronald Lewis, Ann Todd, Christopher Lee.

## MR. SARDONICUS

D: William Castle. S: Ray Russell. With: Oscar Homolka, Guy Rolfe, Ronald Lewis, Audrey Dalton.

1962

## \*THE CABINET OF CALIGARI

D: Roger Kay. S: Robert Bloch. With: Dan O'Herlihy, Glynis Johns, Estelle Winwood, Constance Ford.

## \*WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?

D: Robert Aldrich. S: Lukas Heller (Henry Farrell). With: Bette Davis, Joan Crawford, Victor Buono.

## \*PEEPING TOM

D: Michael Powell. S: Leo Marks. With: Carl Boehm, Moira Shearer, Anna Massey, Shirley Anne Field, Michael Goodlife. Made in Britain in 1960.

## TRAUMA

D: Robert Malcolm Young. S: Young. With: John Conte, Lynn Bari, Lorrie Richards, Rudy Bonner.

1963

## \*THE HAUNTING

D: Robert Wise. S: Nelson Gidding (Shirley Jackson). With: Julie Harris, Claire Bloom, Richard Johnson, Russ Tamblyn, Valentine Dyall.

## \*MANIAC

D: Michael Carreras. S: Jimmy Sangster. With: Kerwin Mathews, Donald Houston, Nadia Gray, Liliane Brousse.

## \*DEMENTIA 13

D: Francis Ford Coppola. S: Coppola. With: William Campbell, Luana Anders, Patrick Magee, Bart Patton.

1964

## \*STRAIGHT-JACKET

D: William Castle. S: Robert Bloch. With: Joan Crawford, Leif Erickson, Diane Baker, Rochelle Hudson, Howard St. John, George Kennedy.

## DEAD RINGER

D: Paul Henreid. S: Albert Beich, Oscar Millard. With: Bette Davis, Karl Malden, Peter Lawford.

## PYRO

D: Julio Coll. S: Sid Pink. With: Barry Sullivan, Martha Hyer, Sherry Moreland, Hugo Pimentel.

## SHOCK TREATMENT

D: Denis Sanders. S: Sydney Boehm. With: Stuart Whitman, Lauren Bacall, Carol Lynley, Roddy McDowall.

## \*NIGHTMARE

D: Freddie Francis. S: Jimmy Sangster. With: David Knight, Moira Redmond, Jennie Linden, Brenda Bruce.

## \*LADY IN A CAGE

D: Walter Grauman. S: Luther Davis. With: Olivia de Havilland, James Caan, Ann Sothorn, Jeff Corey, Jennifer Billingsley, Rafael Campos, Scat Man Cruthers, William Swan.

## \*HUSH... HUSH, SWEET CHARLOTTE

D: Robert Aldrich. S: Lukas Heller, Henry Farrell. With: Bette Davis, Joseph Cotton, Olivia de Havilland, Agnes Moorehead, Mary Astor, Cecil Kellaway, William Campbell.

1965

## \*DIE! DIE! MY DARLING!

D: Silvio Narizzano. S: Richard Matheson. With: Tallulah Bankhead, Stefanie Powers, Yootha Joyce, Donald Sutherland.

## MARNIE

D: Alfred Hitchcock. S: Jay Presson Allen (Winston Graham). With: Tippi Hedren, Sean Connery, Diane Baker, Martin Gabel, Louise Latham.

## I SAW WHAT YOU DID

D: William Castle. S: William McGivern. With: Joan Crawford, John Ireland, Leif Erickson, Sarah Lane, Patricia Breslin, John Crawford.

## \*THE NANNY

D: Seth Holt. S: Jimmy Sangster (Evelyn Piper). With: Bette Davis, William Dix, Wendy Craig, Jill Bennett, James Villiers, Pamela Franklin.

## \*REPULSION

D: Roman Polanski. S: Polanski, Gerard Brach. With: Catherine Deneuve, Yvonne Furneaux, John Fraser.

## \*BUNNY LAKE IS MISSING

D: Otto Preminger. S: John and Penelope Mortimer (John Fowles). With: Carol Lynley, Keir Dullea, Laurence Olivier, Noel Coward.

## \*THE COLLECTOR

D: William Wyler. S: Stanley Mann and John Kohn (John Fowles). With: Terence Stamp, Samantha Eggart.

1966

## \*THE PSYCHOPATH

D: Freddie Francis. S: Robert Bloch. With: Patrick Wymark, Margaret Johnson, John Standing, Judy Huxtable, Don Borisenko, Alexander Knox.

## \*PICTURE MOMMY DEAD

D: Bert I. Gordon. S: Robert Sherman. With: Don Ameche, Martha Hyer, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Susan Gordon, Maxwell Reed, Wendell Corey, Signe Hasso.

1967

## THE DEVIL'S OWN

D: Cyril Frankel. S: Nigel Kneale. With: Joan Fontaine, Kay Walsh, Duncan Lamont, Leonard Rossiter.

## PSYCHO-CIRCUS

D: John Moxey. S: Peter Welbeck (Edgar Wallace). With: Christopher Lee, Leo Genn, Anthony Newlands.

## \*GAMES

D: Curtis Harrington. S: Gene Kearney. With: Simone Signoret, James Caan, Katherine Ross, Don Stroud, Estelle Winwood, Kent Smith, Ian Wolfe, Florence Marly.

1968

## \*BERSERK!

D: Jim O'Connell. S: Aben Kandel and Herman Cohen. With: Joan Crawford, Ty Hardin, Diana Dors, Judy Geeson.

## ROSEMARY'S BABY

D: Roman Polanski. S: Polanski (Ira Levin). With: Mia Farrow, John Cassavetes, Ruth Gordon, Ralph Bellamy.

## THE DEVIL'S BRIDE

D: Terence Fisher. S: Richard Matheson. With: Christopher Lee, Charles Gray, Sarah Lawson, Leon Greene.

## TORTURE GARDEN

D: Freddie Francis. S: Robert Bloch. With: Jack Palance, Burgess Meredith, Peter Cushing, Beverly Adams.

## \*TARGETS

D: Peter Bogdanovich. S: Bogdanovich. With: Boris Karloff, Tim O'Kelly, Sandy Baron, Bogdanovich, Nancy Sueh.

## IN COLD BLOOD

D: Richard Brooks. S: Brooks (Truman Capote). With: Robert Blake, Scott Wilson, John Forsythe.

## THE BOSTON STRANGLER

D: Richard Fleischer. S: Edward Anhalt. With: Tony Curtis, George Kennedy, Henry Fonda, Mike Kellin.

## \*PRETTY POISON

D: Noel Black. S: Lorenzo Semple Jr. (Stephen Geller). With: Anthony Perkins, Tuesday Weld, Beverly Garland, John Randolph, Dick O'Neill.

## \*TWISTED NERVE

D: Roy Boulting. S: Leo Marks, Boulting. With: Hayley Mills, Hywel Bennett, Billie Whitelaw, Phyllis Calvert.

1969

## \*THE MAD ROOM

D: Bernard Girard. S: Girard, A. Z. Martin. With: Stella Stevens, Shelley Winters, Skip Ward, Carol Cole.

## \*WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO AUNT ALICE?

D: Lee H. Katzin. S: Theodore Epstein. With: Geraldine Page, Ruth Gordon, Rosemary Forsythe.

## PARANOIA

D: Umberto Lenzi. S: Lenzi, Ugo Moretti, Marie Sollenville. With: Carroll Baker, Lou Castel, Tino Carraro. Originally made in Italy as ORGASMO.

## \*DADDY'S GONE A-HUNTING

D: Mark Robson. S: Larry Cohen, Lorenzo Semple Jr. With: Paul Burke, MaLa Powers, Carol White, Scot Hylands.

1970

## \*HOW AWFUL ABOUT ALLAN

D: Curtis Harrington. S: Henry Farrell. With: Anthony Perkins, Joan Hackett, Julie Harris, Kent Smith.

1971

## \*PLAY MISTY FOR ME

D: Clint Eastwood. S: Jo Heims, Dean Riesner. With: Clint Eastwood, Jessica Walter, Donna Mills, John Larch.

## \*WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?

D: Curtis Harrington. S: Henry Farrell. With: Debbie Reynolds, Shelley Winters, Dennis Weaver, Agnes Moorehead, Logan Ramsey.

## 10 RILLINGTON PLACE

D: Richard Fleischer. S: Clive Exton (Ludovic Kennedy). With: Richard Attenborough, Judy Geeson, John Hart.

1972

## \*WHO SLEW AUNTIE ROO?

D: Curtis Harrington. S: Robert Bleas, Jimmy Sangster, Gavin Lambert. With: Shelley Winters, Mark Lester, Ralph Richardson, Lionel Jeffries.





The value of Boorman's messages can be debated, but that he has created a well-integrated vision of the present/future cannot be denied.

ZARDOZ A 20th Century-Fox Release. 2/74. 105 minutes. In DeLuxe Color and Panavision. Written, produced and directed by John Boorman. Associate producer, Charles Orme. Design and story associate, Bill Stair. Unit production manager, Seamus Byrne. Assistant director, Simon Relph. Continuity, Jean Skinner. Director of photography, Geoffrey Unsworth, B.S.C. Camera operator, Peter MacDonald. Supervising electrician, Jack Conroy. Sound mixer, Liam Saurin. Set dresser, John Hoesli, Martin Atkinson. Construction manager, Peter McGoldrick. Special effects, Jerry Johnston. Makeup, Basil Newall. Hairdresser, Colin Damison. Costumes by Cristel Kruse Boorman. Made by La Tabard Boutique, Dublin. Wardrobe master, Jack Gallagher. Edited by John Merritt. Dubbing editor, Jim Atkinson. Music by David Munrow. Filmed at Ardmore Studios and on location in County Wicklow, Ireland.

Zed ..... Sean Connery  
 Consuella ..... Charlotte Rampling  
 May ..... Sara Kestleman  
 Friend ..... John Alderton  
 Avalow ..... Sally Anne Newton  
 Arthur Frayn ..... Niall Buggy  
 George Saden ..... Bosco Hogan  
 Old Scientist ..... Christopher Casson  
 Death ..... Reginald Jarman  
 Star ..... Barbara Dowling  
 Apathetic ..... Jessica Swift

Like other portrayals of the future, John Boorman's ZARDOZ draws its inspiration from twentieth century social trends. In the manner of a sociologist, Boorman projects these trends into the year 2293. ZARDOZ deals with dehumanization and the loss of freedom (1984, *Brave New World*, and the somewhat less celebrated *We* by Russian novelist Eugene Zamiatin are the literary forebears of this theme). Rigid social stratification prevails; humanity is literally divided into two separate camps (as in *Metropolis* and *The Time Machine*). Echoes of *Lost Horizon* are apparent in the elements of eternal youth and the secluded serenity of a Shangri-La—known as the Vortex in ZARDOZ. The clinical examination of sex and violence is reminiscent of *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*, and the lack of books smacks of *Fahrenheit 451*. Hence it should be apparent that Boorman is working in the mainstream of a rich tradition.

A brief exposition of Boorman's society should be given before further analysis. In the year 2293 society is divided into two regions, the Vortex and the Outlands, separated from one another by an impenetrable, invisible wall. The Vortex is a lush paradise; the Outlands are dry and dusty. Within the Vortex live the Eternals, equal to one

another but superior to the other classes; the Renegades, a senile sub-class of non-conformists who have been cast from the ranks of the Eternals; and the Apathetics, who could not cope with eternal life and have lapsed into catatonia. Within the Vortex, communication takes place via telepathy, as well as by conventional means. Each of the Eternals has a crystal implanted in his forehead, and each wears a crystal ring; the former is for receiving, the latter is for sending messages to a central crystal, which is the repository for the collective knowledge of the Eternals. Eternal life means a zero death rate, which necessitates a zero birth rate to maintain population stability. Reproduction is passe—not to mention sex. Sleep is also obsolete, having been replaced by a trance-like state known as second-level meditation.

The Outlands are populated by Brutals, including a special task force known as Exterminators, whose job is to keep the population of the Brutals within bounds. The Exterminators are given their orders by enormous flying idols manned by Eternals. The idol is known as Zardoz; the Exterminators worship him and wear helmets fashioned after his image. Zardoz spews guns out of his mouth, as well as propaganda for ZPG ("The gun is good! The penis is evil!"), and promises the Exterminators they will enter the Vortex after death if they do as they are told—namely, brutalize the Brutals. At the decree of Zardoz, elimination of the Brutals gives way to enslaving them to till the land for the benefit of the Eternals.

So much for the organization of society. The plot deals with a Promethean Exterminator named Zed. Having discovered that Zardoz is really an abbreviated form of Wizard of Oz (about a man who frightened people by hiding behind a mask), continued page 44

Scenes from ZARDOZ, currently in release from 20th Century-Fox. Left: The fearsome stone face of Zardoz, a god of the future used to control, manipulate and exploit the masses. Top: Zardoz floats over the verdant outlands summoning together the mounted Exterminators. Middle: In the Vortex, Zed (Sean Connery) overcomes the resistance of May (Sara Kestleman) to his sexual advances, impregnating her and several other Vortex women. Bottom: As a band of Exterminators enter the Vortex to destroy the Eternals, the Apathetics exult in their release from life amid a carnival-like atmosphere. John Boorman, the producer, director and author of ZARDOZ, has directed only one other genre film, *LEO THE LAST* in 1970. Only recently he abandoned preproduction work on a planned film version of J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of The Rings* Trilogy due to its excessive cost.





How did we conjure up a monster in our midst...and why?





# FILM REVIEWS

## DON'T LOOK NOW

...a stylish, but irritatingly postured exercise in tailchasing...

**DON'T LOOK NOW** A Paramount Pictures Release. 1/74. 105 minutes. In Panavision and Technicolor. Executive producer, Anthony B. Unger. Produced by Peter Katz. Directed by Nicholas Roeg. Screenplay by Alan Scott and Chris Bryant based on a story by Daphne du Maurier. Director of photography, Anthony Richmond, B.S.C. Art director, Giovanni Soccol. Set decorator, Francesco Chinanese. Edited by Graeme Clifford. Music by Pino Donnagio.

Laura Baxter ..... Julie Christie  
John Baxter ..... Donald Sutherland  
Heather ..... Hilary Mason  
Wendy ..... Clelia Matania  
Bishop Barbarrigo ..... Massimo Serato  
Inspector Longhi ..... Renato Scarpa

The psycho-thriller, upwardly mobile since *PSYCHO*, keeps attracting one *artiste* after another. Reshuffling Hitchcock's sexual imagery, Roman Polanski comes up with *REPULSION*. Robert Altman's *IMAGES* shows that one does not have to be a hermit in a rundown motel to be warped by solitude. Even Bergman has utilized the psycho-thriller's potential for couching strong psychological commentary beneath its shocks; the symbolic island of *PERSONA*, *HOUR OF THE WOLF*, and *CRIES AND WHISPERS* lies not so far from the Bates Motel as one might think.

Now we have Nicholas Roeg's *DON'T LOOK NOW*—a stylish, but irritatingly postured exercise in tailchasing (for both characters and audience) which goes most psychological thrillers one step better by adding a dash of psychic mystery to the brew. Now-couple Donald Sutherland and Julie Christie lose their daughter (she drowns in a pond) in the film's first scene. Several months later, they are still licking their wounds in symbolically crumbling Venice, when strange things begin to happen. At a restaurant, a blind clairvoyant "sees" the little girl sitting between the parents—setting wife Christie off on a binge of hope which is to carry her characterization through much of the movie. Husband Sutherland remains skeptical until the reality of the small figure only he sees darting back in the shadows sinks in—a gambit which takes care of his motivation, while Ms. Christie is out with her seer. The ending is sad, sad, sad, and somewhat chilling: but evanescently so, since the viewer quickly begins to wonder whether or not the whole thing was worth it.

Why the confusion? Blame director Roeg who, in adapting Daphne du Maurier's story, has edited himself out of what might have been, if nothing else, a fine mood piece. Roeg's opening sequence, for example, cuts mechanically between the little girl by the pond and her parents inside—calling attention to the visual dynamics of the scene, and away from the gravity of the situation. Roeg then shows us Sutherland retrieving the body from the pond in overlapping, staccato, slow-motion jump cuts: again letting us know he can edit, and again detracting from the impact of what is, for this character, his life's most horrible moment. The same thing happens to what could have been a gently erotic love scene (Roeg intercuts flash-forwards of the couple getting dressed), and a pivotal death scene which is punctuated by quick blips of the character's "life flashing before his eyes." Hitchcock makes us watch his characters die, why can't Roeg? Someone should tell him that

his film's two most frightening moments—the blind seer telling Julie Christie that her dead daughter is happy, and the genuinely eerie climax when Sutherland "finds" his daughter—are close-ups: direct, extended, untampered with.

Sutherland and Christie try hard, but most of the time, they simply look uncomfortable in Roeg's fragile frames. Julie Christie, in particular, comes off flatly: odd indeed, for an actress who began (in *DARLING*) by playing the sort of mod, mutely vacuous young well-to-do *DON'T LOOK NOW* purports to be about. If this trend towards capsulizing aimless, affluent lifestyles in horror movies continues (as *DON'T LOOK NOW* and look-alike *IMAGES* indicate), filmmakers are going to have to get one thing straight: are we supposed to empathize with Sutherland/Christie, or look down upon them for the vague, ill-defined sin which has made their spiritual lives such a mess? Roeg wants things both ways: he would like us to *presume* the presence of a *L'AVENTURA* angst, while he takes care of the thrills. What we get lies somewhere in between: a never-never-land where banal arguments and brushing one's teeth symbolize lives "laid bare." What we don't get is the sort of exposition which might have made the loss of the daughter more meaningful: just one pre-death family scene, or even a flashback indicating why the small red-hooded figure Sutherland keeps seeing projects just as much menace as mystery.

The film's theme is even more Borges' "labyrinth without a center" than its plot and characters. Roeg has crammed *DON'T LOOK NOW* full of motifs which cast longer shadows than they should: nervous eyes, oozing liquids, crumbling European ruins, and overt religious symbols which signal "import" at every turn. Mock crucifixes pop up in the most unexpected places. Sutherland keeps crossing the Bridges of Miracles in his search. He is even working on restoring an old church, whose architectural beauty he deeply appreciates, even if its religious beauty is lost on him. "We have stopped listening," mumbles the priest who has contracted Sutherland for the job. The characters don't hear him—and we, the audience, are left to ponder the significance of pat religious metaphors which have lent dime store apocalypses to many a thin film playing dress-up.

The horror film does not need movies edited so dynamically that they come apart at the seams. Nor does it need characters muttering about things "not being what they seem," when the moral fabric of the film doesn't support such claims. Most of all, the genre can do without filmmakers who value intellectual process over dramatic reality—particularly when the intellectual process leads the viewer to confuse superficial emptiness with the transcendental kind. Artists have dragged popular art into holes like this before: if the horror film has to go, let's hope someone else does the dragging besides a Nicholas Roeg.

Harry Ringel

John Baxter (Donald Sutherland) nearly falls to his death from a scaffolding while restoring a Venetian church after ignoring warnings and psychic premonitions that he is in danger. From *DON'T LOOK NOW*, currently in release from Paramount Pictures, a highly overrated horror film with pretensions and little else.





# LOST HORIZON

...has more of a kinship with Conrad Hilton than James Hilton...

**LOST HORIZON** A Columbia Pictures Release. 3/73. 150 minutes. In Metrocolor and Panavision. Produced by Ross Hunter. Directed by Charles Jarrott. Screenplay by Larry Kramer based on the novel by James Hilton. Director of photography, Robert Surtees. Edited by Maury Weintraub. Music by Burt Bacharach with lyrics by Hal David. Production design, Preston Ames. Set decoration, Jerry Wunderlich. Second unit camera, Harold Wellman, Bruce Surtees.

Richard Conway	Peter Finch
Catherine	Liv Ullmann
Sally Hughes	Sally Kellerman
Sam Cornelius	George Kennedy
George Conway	Michael York
Maria	Olivia Hussey
Harry Lovett	Bobby Van
Chang	John Gielgud

"Everything here seems familiar," Peter Finch tells his light-o-love, Liv Ullmann, as they share a tender moment in the new, Ross Hunter version of **LOST HORIZON**. Unfortunately, for Hunter, director Charles Jarrott, Finch and friends, a good many moviegoers are going to be muttering the same thing as they invariably compare this \$5 million fiasco with Frank Capra's classic 1937 film.

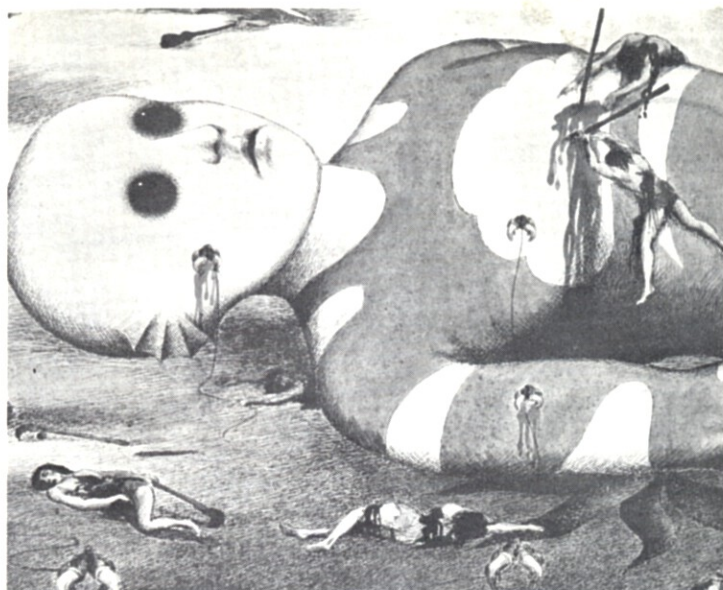
Initially, this remake holds some promise as Finch, a United Nations dignitary, and Michael York, as his newsman brother, work frantically to evacuate the Americans stranded in a war-torn Far Eastern nation. There is an air of old-fashioned high adventure as the brothers, in true Pat Ryan/Terry Lee fashion, rescue the last three refugees—a jaded Newsweek reporter (Sally Kellerman), a second-rate comic on a USO tour (Bobby Van), and a nice-guy embezzler (George Kennedy). And the hijacking of the plane they are aboard and the refueling stopover, with threatening Mongol horsemen looking on, is pure "Terry and the Pirates" hokum, played on a stately, serious level which adds to the fun. Alas, the fun and the Tibetan snow melt quickly when the shanghaied party reaches the Valley of the Blue Moon and the hidden sanctuary known as Shangri-La. This is the place where "sickness is unknown and perfect health is the rule."

Because nothing much of interest happens for the next two hours it is not unfair to say that this new version of Shangri-La has all the magic and mystery of a Southern California health farm, and the architecture and sets suggest that Utopia, in this day and age, has more of a kinship with Conrad Hilton than James Hilton, who imagined it all in a turbulent era when the idea of shunning the world's problems was no sin but almost a necessity.

To justify the excessive running time and supposedly add an extra dimension to the original concept, **LOST HORIZON '73** has been outfitted with the now music of Burt Bacharach and Hal David. Their songs are particularly unmemorable, and their minimal appeal is further diminished by the mechanical, "magic step" staging, which can be attributed to the use of a cast which, save for one fleet-footed member, is ill-suited to meet the demands of singing and dancing. Only Sally Kellerman, as the pill-popping newshen who ultimately finds peace in this tranquil setting, escapes embarrassment with a nicely judged performance, and her musical interlude (a song dedicated to the reasons she dislikes the outside world) is the most satisfying one in the film.

Far down on the cast list there is James Shigeta in the minor role of Brother To-Lenn. At the New York premiere of **LOST HORIZON**, he was mistakenly introduced to the crowd as Don Ho. If Shigeta is wise, he will simply let everyone keep thinking that Ho, and not he, was mired in this stumble Down Memory Lane.

Robert L. Jerome



# FANTASTIC PLANET

...a superbly animated tale of oppression...

**FANTASTIC PLANET** A New World Pictures Release. 12/73. 72 minutes. In Metrocolor. A Co-production of Les Films Armorial O.R.T.F. / Ceskoslovensky Filmexport. Produced by S. Damiani and A. Valio-Cavaglione. Directed by Rene Laloux. Scenario and dialogue by Roland Topor and Rene Laloux. Based on the novel *Oms En Serie* by Stefan Wul. Original artwork by Roland Topor. Music by Alain Goraguer. Directors of photography, Lubomir Rejthar and Boris Baronkin. Chief editors, Helene Arnal and Marta Latalova. Shot in the animation studios of Jiri Trinka and Krtky Film in Prague. Voices by: Jennifer Drake, Sylvie Lenoir, Jean Topart, Jean Valmont, Max Amyl, Yves Barsacq, Paul Ville.

**LA PLANETE SAUVAGE** is a French-Czech co-production, the third collaboration of director Rene Laloux and artist Roland Topor, being released in the United States by Roger Corman's New World Pictures as **FANTASTIC PLANET**. The film, based on a novel by Stefan Wul which the filmmakers claim to have "betrayed intelligently," is a superbly animated tale of oppression set on the planet Ygam, in which a race of humans, the Oms, eventually overcome, or at least assume equality with, their gigantic masters, the Draags, a species of super-scientific androids, 39-feet tall, with light-bulb-headed blue bodies and shining red eyes. The film follows the adventures of a baby Om who is adopted by a young Draag, Tiwa; his absorption of Draag knowledge through a fluke in the educational system; his rebellion and drive to discover via spaceship the secret of the Fantastic Planet; and his leading of his people to freedom.

**FANTASTIC PLANET** is very nearly pure science fiction after the opening bout of surrealism when the giant blue Draag hand suddenly drops into the frame to jarringly alter our perception of the frightened running Om woman. This is indeed a rarity in feature-length animation. But it is not entirely successful. We do not find here the piling up of images or generously intersecting pattern of ideas and images that distinguished and accelerated Heinz Edelmann's breakthrough film **YELLOW SUBMARINE** (1968). Animation has been going through some revolutionary changes in the past few years but compared on the plane of their stylistic content, **FANTASTIC PLANET** is far closer to the traditional Disney than to the violently liberating Ralph Bakshi.

The style of the film should not be unfamiliar, at least to those who have seen Laloux and Topor's earlier films **LES TEMPS MORTS** (1964) and **LES ESCARGOTS** (1965). **FANTASTIC PLANET** fuses two types of animation—the common

American method of drawing on acetate cels and the more lavish and detailed method of animating cut and hinged paper, a technique pioneered by Poland's Jan Lenica and others. **FANTASTIC PLANET** is thus more readily reduced to a comic book medium (i.e. a series of still images) simply because there is less actual movement on the screen (mainly because of the cut-out paper method) than we are used to in our "cartoons." Consequently, the film seems just a bit too mannered and calm.

Linking up with this problem, and also damaging, is the notion that unlike its images, the film's ideas are quite simplistic and too-reflective of its simple story, which amounts to not much more than an outline or a precis. The film too often reduces the fantastic to the known, the mundane, the ordinary. Some ideas are cadged from other sources, like the moving sidewalks that have been a staple of Ray Bradbury stories at least since the late forties. Some ideas are simply too naively bald to consider of much value, like Om being the phonetic equivalent of *l'homme*, the French word for man.

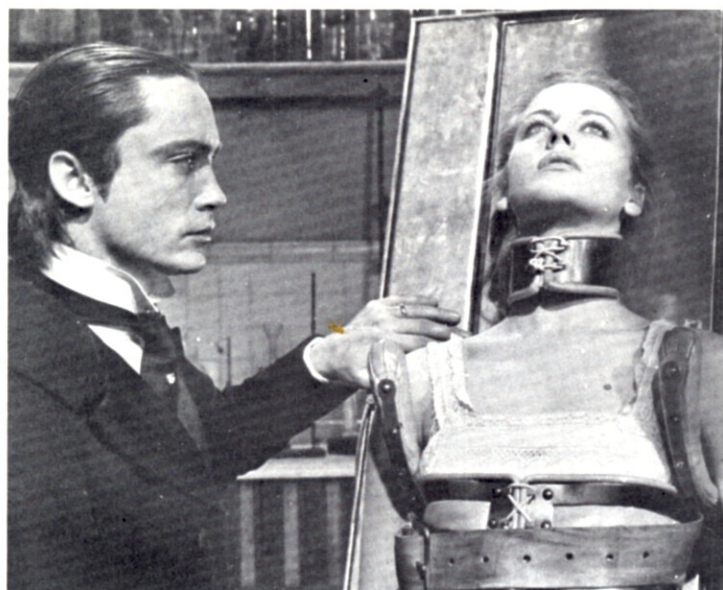
Luckily the film is carried and dominated by its wild, untamed and desolate landscapes, many held in beguiling long-shots that carry a sinister quality that is quite effective and very nearly Beckett-ian. The film is also populated by an infinite array of thoroughly strange creatures and flora (and sometimes indistinguishably in-between); all of them are much more interesting in their brief appearances than both the Draags and the Oms put together, like the ball-like creatures who spin clothes for the Oms, or the ferocious anti-Om monsters, one of whom has a flypaper snout. The menacing settings and dangerous atmosphere in which these creatures thrive is best typified by the plant that bats down the small flying creatures, mainly for sport, and all the while giggling madly.

The film ends, via a hurried narration, on a somewhat unsatisfying and uneasy note of coexistence and peace between the Oms and the Draags. The ending is so abrupt that it is almost as if at this point three or four scenes of this very short film were lost somewhere and a voice-over was hastily added to bridge the gap. We are finally not too sure exactly what **FANTASTIC PLANET** claims to be: myth or allegory. As if to confound the issue, Laloux has described the film as "an epic, a surrealist Western." Perhaps it really is not important where we pigeonhole it, or even if we must. **FANTASTIC PLANET** may not be a great trip for the mind, but for the eyes, at least, it is a resplendent and strangely sensuous journey.

David Bartholomew



Udo Kier as the Baron looks longingly at his female zombie (Dalila Di Lazzaro) in **ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN**, currently in release from Bryanston Pictures. This X rated, full-color, 3-D, widescreen version of **Frankenstein** expresses a genuinely personal vision unlike any other version ever made.



## ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN

...an enormous put-on and an epic freak show.

**ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN** A Bryanston Pictures Release. 6/74. 95 minutes. In Color & Space-vision (3-D). A Carlo Ponti/Jean Pierre Rassam/Andrew Braunsberg Production. Produced by Andy Warhol. Written and directed by Paul Morrissey. Director of photography, Luigi Kuveillier. Edited by Jed Johnson. Music by Claudio Guizzi. Art direction, Enriocio Job.

Field Hand ..... Joe Dallesandro  
Baron's Wife ..... Monique Van Vooren  
Baron ..... Udo Kier  
Farmer ..... Srdjan Zelenovic  
Girl Zombie ..... Dalila Di Lazzaro  
Otto ..... Arno Juerging

The fact that Andy Warhol's new film by Paul Morrissey, **ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN**, does not credit Mary Shelley as its source is both significant and completely justified. It is justified because I'm sure neither Warhol nor Morrissey ever considered he was actually involved in re-working someone else's material. And it is significant because by not having the slightest intention of offering a serious contribution to this sub-genre of *cinéfantastique*, Warhol/Morrissey have actually come up with a Frankenstein which unlike any other I can think of expresses a genuinely personal vision. It is indeed **ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN** and no one else's—an enormous put-on and an epic freak show.

For the first time in Warhol Factory history one of its productions (soon to become two when **BLOOD FOR DRACULA** is released) has been granted a real budget—\$500,000 from producer Carlo Ponti—and Factory director Morrissey has responded in kind by turning out a real movie with real sets, real cutting, real production values—plus the added bonus of 3-D (or Space-vision) which makes this Factory film an intentionally commercial endeavor. And yet none of this sudden success has swayed Warhol/Morrissey from their common and consistent goal—the freakish parody of both films and the film industry, including audiences and critics as well.

In the early days they took transvestites like Holly Woodlawn and Pop Art personalities like Viva and promoted them as "superstars" in direct parody of the Hollywood star system. And in films like **FLESH** and **TRASH**, they aped two other kinds of filmmaking, *cinéma vérité* and underground. **HEAT** in 1972 brought them ever closer to the legitimate Hollywood scene by offering a professional actress this time, Oscar nominee Sylvia Miles, as an aging film star living alone in a plush mansion while keeping a former child star now unemployed actor (Joe Dallesandro) on

call for stud service. **HEAT** was a commercial hit, acclaimed for its perceptions of the tawdry new Hollywood scene and applauded for its introduction of plot for once.

Now there is **ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN**, the goal towards which the Factory seems to have been working all along—a truly commercial venture which parodies a genre of mass appeal, the horror film. We are flung head-long into a Castle Frankenstein the likes of which we have never seen but (and this is the key to all of the Warhol/Morrissey films) quite possibly had imagined in our own more perverse dreams. We have always known that even the most obsessed scientist must have a sexual drive. Warhol/Morrissey here at last reveal what turns on Baron Victor (Udo Kier). Mounting his own gorgeous female creation (Dalila Di Lazzaro), he feverishly slips his hand through an incision in her side and massages her gall bladder until he achieves a climax. "To know death, Otto," he quips to his idiot assistant who looks on, tongue hanging out, "you must fuck life in the gall bladder." The Baron achieves private satisfaction by pawing every raw liver he can get his hands on, and the Frankenstein closet has at last come creaking open after years of secrecy disguised as horror movie clichés. The Baron winds up with his own liver dangling at the end of a pole about four feet from his nose and about two inches from ours, thanks to Space-vision. Quoting Karloff, his new creation then confesses: "I belong dead," and undoes himself, quite literally, as his guts spill into our laps!

One critic has already written of this Frankenstein that more spoofery and fewer buckets of gore might have improved it. I disagree totally, for the comic core of the piece lay precisely in its Niagara of blood. To Morrissey, mutilation is indeed the message, and he piles it on so thickly that by the final frame the entire audience is laughing hysterically. And box offices everywhere are being broken.

Nevertheless, despite all this lack of pretense, **ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN**, as I said at the outset, does express a genuine personal vision and, perhaps unconsciously, a very real horror. Supplanting the present day natural weirdos of **FLESH**, **TRASH**, and **HEAT** are characters we've all grown up with finally pigeonholed as the freaks they are, thus proving that all anyone had to do to create the first really original and commercially successful version of Frankenstein in years was to update the preoccupations of all concerned, on both sides of the screen. It's a penetrating insight, but a lousy thought.

John McCarty

## DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT

...the eerie journey of an integrated personality through a world of disintegration.

**DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT** A Hallmark Release. 9/73. 95 minutes. In Color. Executive producer, Walter L. Krusz. Produced and directed by S. F. Brownrigg. Original screenplay by Tim Pope. Director of photography, Robert Alcott. Music by Robert Farrar.

Sam ..... William Bill McGhee  
Dr. Masters ..... Anne MacAdams  
Charlotte Beale ..... Rosie Holotik  
Oliver W. Cameron ..... Gene Ross  
Jane St. Claire ..... Jessie Lee Fulton  
Harriet ..... Camilla Carr  
Jennifer ..... Harriet Warren  
Danny ..... Jessie Kirby  
Sgt. Jaffee ..... Hugh Feagin  
Dr. Stevens ..... Michael Harvey  
Allyson ..... Betty Chandler  
Mrs. Callingham ..... Rhea MacAdams

The advertising for **DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT** claims that it was made by the same folks who brought us **LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT**, a low-budget shocker which used violent sensationalism to make up for what it lacked in acting, sound recording, and credibility. **DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT**, however, is in every way superior to its predecessor.

At the beginning of the film, the director of an experimental insane asylum is axed to death by one of his inmates during a therapy session. His assistant, a lady doctor, vows to carry on the director's innovative techniques. Although the lady doctor's dedication is obvious at first, her treatment of the inmates progresses from strictness to brutality, and we finally learn that she is just another inmate living in an elaborately constructed fantasy world.

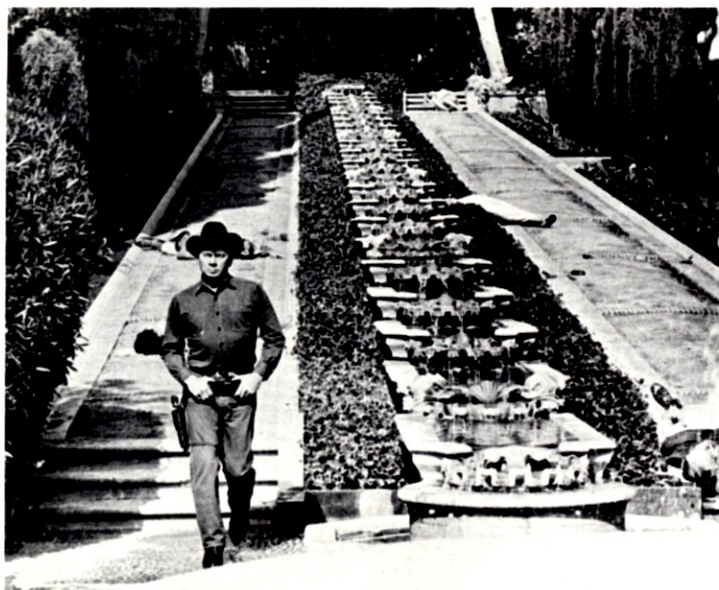
The other inmates include a hulking Negro man with the intelligence and innocence of a child, a judge consumed with guilt, a man who believes he is an army sergeant, an old hag whose insanity is compounded by senility, a pitiful girl whose maternal instincts are fixated on a doll, a teen-aged bully, and a girl so starved for love, she offers herself to any available man (which makes for an amusing yet tense situation when a telephone repairman comes to the asylum). All of the characters are vividly portrayed by a cast of unknowns, and the usual possibilities for gross overacting—a perennial danger in melodramas—are never realized. Neither are there any attempts at cheap humor concerning the peculiarities of the behavior of the inmates.

Although the inmates are patently insane, one can recognize fragments of sanity within them. Hence the distance between the viewer and the inmates is not as great as it could have been, leaving open the way to audience identification. Each inmate seems to represent some facet of humanity as seen through a distorting prism: love, guilt, hatred, innocence, infancy, childhood, youth, maturity, and old age. Each inmate is hopelessly mired in his own obsessions. Occasionally one tries to get through to another, but such attempts always fail. The composite society is as hermetically sealed off from the outside world as the inmates are from one another. The one representative of sanity is a young nurse who comes to work at the asylum, not knowing that the lady doctor is an inmate. Through her we experience the eerie journey of an integrated personality through a world of disintegration. At the end of the film, she flees the asylum, leaving the inmates to devour each other.

The outstanding achievement of **DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT** is its creation of a claustrophobic ambience of horror—the first film to do so since **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD**.

Frank Jackson





Yul Brynner as the gunslinger robot, a commanding figure whose archetypal significance is the key to the meaning of *WESTWORLD*, not as a parable of the horrors of sophisticated technology gone mad, but as a comment on the nature of film as the media of fantasy. The film, in release from MGM, marks an impressive directorial debut for screenwriter Michael Crichton.

## WESTWORLD

...a capital study of film as game and spectacle.

**WESTWORLD** A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Release. 8/73. 88 minutes. In Panavision and Metrocolor. Produced by Paul N. Lazarus III. Written and directed by Michael Crichton. Director of photography, Gene Polito. Art director, Herman Blumenthal. Edited by David Bretherton, A.C.E.

Gunslinger ..... Yul Brynner  
Peter Martin ..... Richard Benjamin  
John Blane ..... James Brolin  
Chief Supervisor ..... Alan Oppenheimer  
Banker ..... Dick Van Patten

There is a tradition in film criticism that holds that the more realistic a film—the closer to objective reality—the better it is, a tradition that denounces any massive manipulation of reality. The main exponent of this theory was Andre Bazin (1918-1958), the main example of what he looked for being Roberto Rossellini. Now the best work of this great director—*VIAGGIO IN ITALIA* and *LA PRISE DE POUVOIR PAR LOUIS XIV*—is quite extraordinary and a landmark in the cinema, but the opposing method of filmmaking—that of Eisenstein—also produced remarkable films: *STRIKE!* and *IVAN THE TERRIBLE*. It is not my intention to choose one rather than the other, for this gets us nowhere. What I would like to do, as an introduction to what *WESTWORLD* is, is to comment briefly on the ideological implications of "realism."

The problem lies in the fact that filming what is in front of the camera hardly conveys reality in all its massive complexities, however subtly you organize your material by cross-references, counter-pointing, etc. (*VIAGGIO IN ITALIA* is absolutely exemplary here). For a start, any organization of the material undermines reality inasmuch as real life cannot be ordered into a coherent, linear discourse as a film can. Moreover, what about those elements not in front of the camera? And, most important of all, what about the socio-historic/political background to what you are showing? This last aspect in particular tends to be carefully masked or side-stepped by vague social references.

We come back in fact to the old problem: the illusion of reality and the reality of illusion. What we see up there on the screen is certainly real in the sense that it has an objective reality: light, movement, shape, etc. Yet this reality is an illusion, for the movement that we see is false. Actor X may have run in front of the camera, but his running is recorded on each frame as a still, animated later by a projector. The vast majority of films are built carefully on the desire to draw the audience into a non-existent, artificially

created world resembling the real world, but presented in such a way as to allow the spectator to bring his fantasies to life: the events are realistic through the use of actors whose actual existence can be proved outside their "existence" in the film, thus lending "verisimilitude" to the entire enterprise.

This brings us back to *WESTWORLD*. For what is Michael Crichton's magnificent film but a commentary on its own nature as a film, revealing its own production process within a system that is heavily coded and relies on genre to create that dream world it encourages people to identify with. I would suggest that it is this, rather than the dangers of over-sophisticated technology—a well-worn theme—that *WESTWORLD* is "about."

The three dream worlds re-created in Delos for the delight and edification of wealthy drones—the cost of a holiday is far beyond the pockets of most people, although the propaganda for the place hides the fact by concentrating, precisely, on the opportunity to live out one's dreams—may well be absolutely authentic in their presentations of the surface appearance of Rome, the Middle Ages and the West. This, however, is not the point: the worlds correspond exactly to the cinema's—and especially Hollywood's—version of what those worlds were like. *WESTWORLD* thus becomes an analysis of Hollywood as a dream factory, purveying illusions to millions by encouraging them to take the false for the true, the appearance for the reality. The film reveals itself and, by extension, all movies, as a massive and elaborate game. The world of Delos is to the rest of the film what *WESTWORLD* is to the cinema: a meta-text commenting on its own position and function within the system.

Two aspects of the film are particularly revealing when seen in this light: the behavior of the Richard Benjamin character and the film's success in drawing the audience into the dream world it so splendidly creates, only to reveal it as a dream, thus shattering the illusion and causing that profound feeling of frustration that films made to be purveyed as dreams carefully avoid. Once again, it is necessary to insist on the meta-textual nature of the enterprise: by revealing Delos as a dream world which the characters look upon as real, the film unmasks its own reality as an illusion. Take, for example, the scene where Benjamin and James Brolin go into the saloon. The latter orders a whisky, the former a vodka martini! In other words, Brolin has entered into the game from the outset, whereas Benjamin is still at the stage of seeing Delos for what it is: a pure fabrication. Brolin, significantly, accuses him of not entering into the spirit of the thing: he

recognizes that it's a game, but lives it as if it were real. By the time they come to sleep with a couple of prostitutes, they are both genuinely inclined to think that the robots are real people and are able to reconcile within a single utterance the fact that they are not with their desire to feel that they are: reality and illusion become indistinguishable, which is precisely how films function. The important thing to remember here is that the robots playing real people in the film are real people—actors and actresses—pretending to be robots pretending to be real people. The whole illusion is unmasked and hence the very nature of the film.

Just how easy it is to force spectators to get carried away can be seen in two crucial sequences, one where Brolin is bitten by a snake, the other where Benjamin saves a woman from torture in the dungeons. I immediately assumed in the first case that the snake was real as they were no longer in the town; but they were still in Delos, so the snake was only a robot, albeit a malfunctioning one. In other words, I had become so wrapped up in the film that I was unable to distinguish between fact and fiction, as if an actor would have been bitten by a real snake! I had begun to participate in the game and hence to believe in illusion as reality. The sequence in the dungeons is even more significant, for Benjamin—and, by extension, the audience—has just been through a series of terrifying experiences, by the end of which he should be able to realize that the dream is real, while we should understand that a film is a mere fiction. Yet we, like him, take the girl for real: she is only a robot.

This is certainly not the only way of approaching *WESTWORLD* and it is always necessary to accept the polyvalency of a text, but I would suggest that it is more important to see how a film—or a novel—produces its connotations than to pick one major theme that is a mere product—however important—of this textual activity and to discuss it as a mere, fixed idea. The "dangers of technology" theme can take no account of the visual presentation of the worlds of Delos and doesn't get very far in analyzing the crucial iconography of Yul Brynner who exists as a figure within the genre of the Western: *THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN* and, especially, Richard Wilson's superb *INVITATION TO A GUNFIGHTER*. Michael Crichton plays up to our expectations—based on movie-going—the better to underline how they are conditioned. *WESTWORLD* joins *PEEPING TOM*, *PERFORMANCE*, *BREWSTER MCCLOUD* and *SLEUTH* as a capital study of film as game and spectacle.

Reynold Humphries





Katsuo Nakamura.

**DEMONS** A Film Images Release. 1972. 135 minutes. In Black & White. A Matsumoto (Tokyo, Japan) Production. Written and directed by Toshio Matsumoto. Based on the Kabuki play "Kamikakete Sango Taisetsu" by Nankoku Tsuryu. In Japanese with English subtitles. With: Katsuo Nakamura, Yasuko Sanjo, Juro Kara.

Toshio Matsumoto is one of the more original and technically assured young directors of Japan. This is his first major film, a Samurai tale which uses its plot—a simple story of revenge that has fueled countless westerns—as a starting point for tackling more important ideas. One of these is violence, an ugly, graphic (and commercial) sort of violence, and the screen fairly reeks of blood and death and the twin agonies of killing and dying. Matsumoto seeks to link his excessive violence to thematic concerns in showing the Samurai warrior's conversion from man to demon (finally even haunted like Lang's Mabuse by the shades of those he has slaughtered) and his virtually physical descent into hell from a world which, as a title card states, is a sea of blood.

But Matsumoto's point, singular and naked, is made over and over with needless repetition. Some attempts at stylization make this tragically humorless and strangely emotionless film occasionally too arty. The film is based on a Kabuki play and in addition to filmic means theatrical techniques are also employed, as several scenes are held at a distance with the actors moving out of a lighted tableau as if on a stage. Tatsuo Sasaki's photography is brilliant, with the blacks black and the whites blinding; there is a texture unusual in low-key photography that you can almost reach out and feel.

Matsumoto's abilities with actors are excellent, and his pacing and visceral hold on his audience uncanny, but the film slowly becomes blunt and distasteful. Hidden around the edges, and curiously untroubled, in the relationships of several of the characters, is the notion that Matsumoto is going after something more ambitious than a horror tale. Perhaps it is that in his renegade warrior he is attempting nothing less than the savage and radical redefinition of the traditional figure of the Samurai—the active embodiment of honor and duty—an act akin to what Altman did to Marlowe the private dick (a treasured institution in American movies) in *THE LONG GOODBYE*. A reluctance to violate such traditions in Japanese film has created an entirely new, circa-GODFATHER genre in Japan (the *yakuza-eiga*, discussed by Paul Schrader in the Jan/Feb Film Comment). Viewed from this angle, Matsumoto's film is as brave as it is revolutionary.

David Bartholomew

**CRIES AND WHISPERS** A New World Pictures Release. 12/72. 95 minutes. In Eastmancolor. Produced, written and directed by Ingmar Bergman. With: Ingrid Thulin, Liv Ullmann, Harriet Andersson, Kari Sylwan.

In deep, scarlet reds, pale whites, and suffused purple, Ingmar Bergman cloaks his exquisite allegory of life in a breathless shimmer of fantasy. This film belongs among his greatest masterpieces, which include *THE SEVENTH SEAL*, *THE NAKED NIGHT* and *PERSONA*, in the skillful blend of depressed reality and diffused fantasy, often occurring in the minds of his protagonists.

His film revolves around a group of women reliving their tragic past amid an unbearable present, filtered with glorious visions of things as they might, or used to, be. Throughout the harsh realities of their present circumstances, Bergman interweaves a hazy visual aura of unreality, as in so many of his best films. Of course, his photographer, Sven Nykvist, must also be given credit for once again helping Bergman to achieve stunning effects that evoke a variety of powerful emotional responses.

For about two decades, Bergman has given us some of the most beautiful and awe inspiring expressions of the human condition, showing in both subtle and elaborate detail, that reality and fantasy are often one and the same. The latest is not an end, but another magnificent beginning in Bergman's chronicle of life.

Dale Winogura

# SHORT NOTICES

**THE BOARDED WINDOW** No Distributor Set. 8/73. 17 minutes. In Color. An Orsen Welles Film School Production. Written, produced and directed by Alan Beattie from a short story by Ambrose Bierce. With: Leonard Wolf, Nancy Ferguson.

This short follows closely the original five-page Ambrose Bierce story about Murlock, a man who prepares his wife for burial, goes to sleep and awakens in darkness to find a panther feeding on her corpse. Both story and film end with the suggestion that she has fought back. Alan Beattie, a 24-year-old Boston director, has expressed his desire for straight-forward storytelling, and his emotion-laden film, shot in ten days, is just that: carefully structured images combining with crisp sound effects of water rushing, birds and crickets, building steadily toward a startling climax.

As described by Bierce, an unknown horror takes place in "black darkness" with Murlock's rifle blast providing a split second of "vivid illumination." The darkness, crucial to Bierce's last page, is here diluted so the camera can record a stunning sequence of fear by gifted actor Wolf, shooting blindly with the rifle, followed by a totally convincing shot, edited to an eyeblink, of a mountain lion and his meal. For this brief shot, Beattie made a plaster impression of Nancy Ferguson's face, creating a full length dummy with her likeness, and then spent two days shooting at New Jersey's Animal Kingdom Talent Service, much of this time spent waiting for the mountain lion to go after the chicken meat hidden in the dummy's neck.

Dawn comes, and, in the final shot, the film, doggedly faithful to Bierce, falters slightly. Murlock's wife has "a fragment of the animal's ear" between her teeth. What is seen on screen, however, appears to be about five inches long, rammed down the woman's throat; the effect of this is bizarre and quite baffling to many. A poll, conducted by Beattie, revealed that 50 to 60% of the test audience found the ending confusing or gave their own fantasy interpretations of its meaning. This doesn't bother Beattie, who feels "ambiguity" is inherent in Bierce's climax, but he is a bit that some audience members, shocked by one blood, look away from the screen and miss the final punch entirely.

Although it never quite attains the level set by Robert Enrico in his superb 1962 Bierce triptych *IN THE MIDST OF LIFE* ("An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," "The Mockingbird," and "Chickamauga"), it's certainly deserving of the awards it has received: Winner, Bronze Medal, Atlanta Film Festival; Honorable Mention, Chicago Film Festival; Winner, Dramatic Film Category, New England Student Film Festival.

Bob Stewart

**WONDER WOMEN** A General Film Corporation Release. 5/73. 82 minutes. In Color. Produced by Ross Hagen. Directed by Robert O'Neil. Original screenplay by Lou Whitehall adapted by O'Neil. With: Nancy Kwan, Ross Hagen, Maria De Aragon, Roberta Collins, Tony Lorea, Ross Rival.

If your expectations are minimal, you might

enjoy this low-brow affair, but he warned it is a karate-chop, Kung-fusion closer in spirit, and style, to Old Hollywood than New Cathay (e.g. *FISTS OF FURY*). Filmed in and around Manila, the Shangri-la of the foreign-made low-budget quickie, it features a curiously reserved Nancy Kwan as Dr. Su, a Dragon Lady who prides herself on being in "the transplant business." She sends her all-girl army of posturing blondes and brunettes to capture the world's top athletes and then, in her operating theatre, she carefully dismembers her victims, selling the serviceable parts to aging millionaires who need new livers, kidneys, etc. Ross Hagen is acceptable as the tubby, gravel-voiced insurance investigator dispatched by Lloyds of London to destroy Miss Kwan's island fortress, and he gets bounced around quite a bit before succeeding. The villainess, however, disappears in a puff of smoke, vowing to return. There is no denying there is a market for this escapist nonsense; an audience of tired workers all too willing to slip off into a fantasy world of Amazonian women, verile men, secret strongholds and militant mutations in the underground dungeons. If only, in this instance, it were well done.

Robert L. Jerome

**THE CREEPING FLESH** A Columbia Pictures Release. 10/72. 92 minutes. In Color. A World Film Services Film. Produced by Michael Redbourn. Directed by Freddie Francis. Screenplay by Peter Spenceley and Jonathan Rumbold. With: Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Lorna Heilbron, Michael Ripper.

This film presents a novel vision of the entrance of evil into the world. Peter Cushing portrays an anthropologist who discovers a large, gorilla-like skeleton on a tropical island. He also learns of a native superstition about rain releasing evil spirits. While cleaning the skeleton with water, he discovers that water makes flesh materialize on one of the phalanges. Cushing does his best to keep the skeleton away from moisture, and his half-brother (Christopher Lee), the director of an insane asylum, steals the skeleton during a downpour, and evil finds its way into the world.

Along the way several sub-plots are woven around the main plot: Cushing's scientific rivalry with Lee, the escape of an inmate from Lee's institution, and Cushing's daughter (Lorna Heilbron) going mad. A Caligari-like framework is employed in which Cushing, as an inmate in Lee's institution, relates his story to an attendant. As in *CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI*, the head of the institution is the villain of the narrator's story. We do not know whether the tale is fact or fabrication. The framework device is no less effective for having been used before, but this is hardly the landmark film *CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI* was. It is a competent thriller as it should be, for Cushing, Lee and Francis are old hands at this sort of thing. An interesting post-script is that Columbia sold the film to television although it had not yet been a full year in theatrical distribution, indicating a lazy, fast-buck attitude that is becoming prevalent among the major distributors.

Frank Jackson

Anthropologist Peter Cushing falls victim to *THE CREEPING FLESH*, directed by Freddie Francis.



Suzy Kendall.

**TALES THAT WITNESS MADNESS** A Paramount Pictures Release. 10/73. 90 minutes. In Color. A World Film Services Film. Produced by Norman Priggen. Directed by Freddie Francis. Original screenplay by Jay Fairbank. Made at Shepperton Studios, England. With: Kim Novak, Georgia Brown, Joan Collins, Jack Hawkins, Donald Houston, Michael Jayston, Suzy Kendall, Peter McEnery, Michael Petrovitch, Donald Pleasance, Russell Lewis, Neil Kennedy, Mary Tamm, David Wood, Richard Connaught, Lesley Nunnerley.

At a distance this World Film Services production bears an uncomfortable resemblance to an earlier Amicus horror anthology, *ASYLUM*, penned by Robert Bloch. This may suggest that screenwriter Jay Fairbank researched his script by checking out the competition first. In fairness, however, it should be noted that the film is directed by Freddie Francis, who has done some of his best work in Amicus horror anthologies, namely *TALES FROM THE CRYPT*. And further, the film owes its success not to any similarity with Amicus anthologies (the framework story involving the insane asylum is the weakest segment of the film), but to some finely written horror tales with an emphasis on originality if not innovation. The film is, in fact, far superior to anything Amicus has done in the field and allows Francis, a director who has often been defeated by trite and showman material, to work at the full range of his capabilities.

The best of five tales is "Luau," also the longest, a carefully sustained mood piece involving supernatural voodoo that relies not on shock for its effect, but on character identification and a steadily mounting tension which Francis orchestrates to a finely tuned, inevitable crescendo. Michael Petrovitch is outstanding as an Hawaiian Prince who must slaughter a girl and feed the cooked flesh to her mother in a carefully proscribed voodoo ritual demanded by the impending death of his aged Mama-Lou. Also outstanding is "Penny Farthing," an absolutely outrageous tale of a young antique dealer who becomes possessed by the spiritual forces of a Victorian gentleman that linger within the eyes of his sepia-toned type and within the parts of his favored bicycle, the Penny Farthing of the title. Writer Jay Fairbank shows a clear understanding that the horror tale derives its effect from a mystery of things unexplained and unexplainable and so treats a delicate line between keeping his tale within the grasp of the viewer but tantalizingly beyond our complete comprehension. Not as fully realized, but equally bizarre, is "Mel," the story of a haunted tree trunk that strives for humor as well as horror. "Mr. Tiger" is the least original and weakest of the tales (outside of the framework story) about a young boy's fantasy that has some frighteningly real manifestations for his parents. This segment owes a heavy debt to Val Lewton, and Francis does well in working with suggestive horror, but the shortness of the segment prevents a development of the implicit psychological and psychic resonances needed to make it truly frightening.

Frederick S. Clarke

**THE PYX** A Cinerama Release. 11/73. 111 minutes. In Panavision and Color. Produced by Maxine Samuels and Julian Roffman. Directed by Harvey Hart. Screenplay by Robert Schlitt from the novel by John Buell. Filmed in Montreal, Canada. With: Karen Black, Christopher Plummer, Donald Pilon, Lee Broker, Yvette Brind'Amour, Jean-Louis Roux, Jacques Godin, Terry Haig, Robin Gammell, Louis Rinfret.

This film reminds one of Sidney Lumet's *CHILD'S PLAY* in its subtle filtering of satanic undertones, brought to the surface only at the end. Harvey Hart is not as smoothly structured in style as Lumet was, but he still sustains an unusual narrative quite well. Abruptly cutting between the investigation of a prostitute's murder (or suicide), and the events leading up to that fatal moment, Hart's film almost seems like an unpolitical version of Dusan Makavejev's film, *LOVE AFFAIR*. There is little cinematic transition from one story to the other, and so the intrinsic relationship between the determined cop and the murdered girl is lost more than often. How satanism gets into the film is one of





Kerwin Matthews in *THE BOY WHO CRIED WEREWOLF*, makeup by Tom Burman.

Hart's major triumphs. He sets up the bleak, moody atmosphere and develops it with cold, exacting force. As with *Lumet*, the presence of supernatural evil is strongly felt long before any Black Mass ritual is performed. The film's title refers to the vessel in Roman Catholic ritual in which the sacred host is placed for use in receiving communion or administering the last rites. Allegedly, Robert Buell's novel on which the film is based was at one time owned by James Mason and Curtis Harrington, but no studio would touch it. It's all speculation as to what they could have done with it, but Hart, his cast and crew, have done remarkably well.

Dale Winogura

**RHINOCEROS** An American Film Theatre Release. 1974. 104 minutes. In Panavision and Eastman Color. Produced by Ely Landau. Executive producer, Edward Lewis. Directed by Tom O'Horgan. Screenplay by Julian Barry based on the play by Eugene Ionesco. Filmed at 20th Century-Fox Studios, Hollywood. With: Zero Mostel, Gene Wilder, Karen Black, Joe Silver, Percy Rodrigues, Robert Weil, Marilyn Chris.

Ely Landau's American Film Theatre dips into cinefantasy with its film of Eugene Ionesco's "Rhinceros" and re-joins the team from *THE PRODUCERS*, Zero Mostel and Gene Wilder. The film is disappointing in many respects; Ionesco's precisely absurdist world is too easily ground into the humdrum realism of the seventies, and the central action, in which everyone begins to metamorphose into rhinoceri, breaks down too quickly and explicitly into a pat "us vs. them" situation. Whether the play is about Nazism or conformism, I kept thinking of Don Siegel's pods.

Thankfully, Tom O'Horgan's somewhat childish flamboyance that so dominates his theatre work ("Hair," "Lenny" and "Jesus Christ, Superstar") is toned down. Unfortunately, he still does not know enough about making movies. He and scriptwriter Julian Barry have made the fatal mistake of modernizing an avant-garde play (published in 1958), which sounds as ludicrous as is, indeed, the product of their endeavors. Zero Mostel nearly smothers the film, as he is wont to do with weak directors. If you are a faithful Mostel fan, you may virtuously bathe in the loud opulence of the second act—his transformation. If you're not, you may be in a better position to appreciate an absolutely brilliant performance by Gene Wilder.

David Bartholomew

Gene Wilder.



**THE BOY WHO CRIED WEREWOLF** A Universal Release. 1973. 91 minutes. In Technicolor. Produced by Aaron Rosenberg. Directed by Nathan H. Juran. Screenplay by Bob Homel. With: Kerwin Matthews, Elaine Devry, Robert J. Wilke, Scott Sealey, Bob Homel, Susan Foster, George Haynes, Jack Lucas.

Writer Bob Homel comes up with the idea that the old fable about the boy who cried wolf can be modified to include a werewolf. The horror genre seems to be peculiarly susceptible to this kind of gimmickry. Fair enough: decent films have been made from equally flimsy premises—but not this time. The plot tells of a boy and his father who are attacked by a werewolf. The father manages to kill the werewolf, but he is bitten by it in the process. No one will believe the boy when he tells of the attack, and no one believes him when he complains that his father is beginning to show similar lycanthropic tendencies. Along the way a coterie of Jesus freaks provide some amusement (Bob Homel writes himself a juicy part as their leader), but the film doesn't need this comic relief. What it needs is some genuine horror to relieve the tedium.

There are intriguing Oedipal overtones in the film: the boy's parents are divorced, and they compete for his affection, which he divides evenly until fear of his father drives him into his mother's arms. Sadly, the listless direction never takes any notice of the inherent possibilities, let alone develop or come to grips with them.

Western fans may note the name of Aaron Rosenberg, who produced the Anthony Mann-James Stewart westerns for Universal in the early fifties. Director Nathan Juran and star Kerwin Matthews have worked well in the past with Ray Harryhausen (both were involved in *THE THREE WORLDS OF GULLIVER*), and Juran directed *THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON*. We mention this in their defense, for this film is hardly an illustrious or representative entry in their filmographies.

Frank Jackson

**THE CONVERSATION** A Paramount Pictures Release. 4/74. 113 minutes. In Color. A Coppola Company Production. Produced by Fred Roos. Written and directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Filmed in San Francisco. With: Gene Hackman, John Cazale, Allen Garfield, Frederic Forrest, Cindy Williams, Michael Higgins, Elizabeth Mac Rea, Teri Garr, Harrison Ford, Mark Wheeler.

The dreadfully real technology revealed during the Watergate investigations lends a special relevance to Francis Ford Coppola's film about wiretapping. However, the film's astonishingly prophetic script was written five years ago. It is far more than a quick cash-in on recent scandals. It is Coppola's most successfully realized work to date. In it he combines the technological monsters we know are real with those we suspect to be real and focuses finally and most ruthlessly on the one person no one thinks much about: the man doing the listening.

As a thriller plain and simple, the film is without peer. It has a slow and careful pace at first that accelerates to moments of indescribable fright. There is a bathroom scene that will make you afraid ever to use indoor plumbing again and a twist ending so completely surprising and convincing as to change the meaning of every scene in the film and make the denouement of *LES DIABOLIQUES* seem predictable in comparison.

The intellectual and artistic shocks here will linger long after *THE EXORCIST*'s green bile and raging screams are forgotten. Its technology, seen in fascinating, painstaking detail is no less fantastic (and far less speculative) than that of 2001: *A SPACE ODYSSEY*. Coppola is not the first filmmaker to present a nightmare world of humans without humanity or human rights. But his nightmare is the most convincing because it is the world in which we live.

Christopher Baffer

**BLACKENSTEIN** An L. F. G. Films Release. 8/73. 92 minutes. In Color. A Carlo Ponnampalam Presentation. Produced by Frank R. Salter. Directed by William A. Levey. With: John Hart, Joe DiSue, Ivory Stone.

A blatant rip-off of AIP's character *Blacula*, *Blackenstein* (Joe DiSue) is actually a Viet Nam war veteran who had the misfortune to step on a mine, losing both arms and legs in the process. The unfortunate fellow is engaged to a female assistant to Dr. Frankenstein (John Hart), who believes that the ex-patriot could lead a happy, normal life with the assistance of an arm and leg grafting operation. The good doctor's butler has been rejected by the young lady, so he feeds the black basket case a solution that has the power of reverting man back to a neanderthal state of being. With frequent dosages he gradually alters physically into something that resembles the Frankenstein monster (the Karloff/Chaney Jr. Strange variety, of course), from his flattened head and lumpy brow all the way down to his oversized Hush Puppies.

The film offers little to sustain interest, regardless of the moody photography and an assortment of barely-clad ladies. The sets are the old Kenneth Strickfadden constructions (seen in most Frankenstein films since the original in 1931) and look like Aurora hobby kits when photographed in color. An atmospheric shot of the castle from afar is shown at the beginning of each new scene, a device that fails to prevent the film from being anything less than the complete and utter failure that it is.

Tim Lucas

**CASUAL RELATIONS** 1973. 80 minutes. In Color and Black & White. Released, produced, directed, written and edited by Mark Rappaport. Seen at 1st Avenue Screening Room, New York. With: Sis Smith, Mel Austin, Paula Barr, Adrienne Claiborne, Peter Campus, Alan Dahl, Julio Dominguez, Rich La Bonte, Helen Lachs, Niki Logis, Tyler Smith, Pam Vihel.

Mark Rappaport's independently-made film conveys a highly personal view of the fragmented confusion of modern life. We studiously peer in to the lives and sometimes fantasies of an interlocking series of characters over the space of a single day. At times, with its deliberately slow pace and long static takes, the film becomes tedious (too casual) as its bored and strung-out characters. Usually, Rappaport is rescued by his visual resourcefulness; his visual ideas are so much more interesting than his philosophical ones, although the latter predominate and tend to weigh down the film with a self-conscious artiness.

When not on drugs or dreams, most of the film's characters escape their stultifying everyday lives by watching movies, TV, newsreels, even countryside from a car window. Consequently what is watched is lampooned by Rappaport, including stag films (which isn't really possible) and, more interestingly, in a film-within-a-film, a lengthy spoof of vampire movies called "A Vampire's Love." A black-clad figure and his victim lover act out the familiar formula: elements of the lore are isolated and displayed as if in a primer. The camera remains fixed, while each shot is announced by a morose commentary ("We were happy as two teenagers in love.") Since few props are used and the camera style is emotionally neutral with the figures in a constant medium shot and photographed against pure backgrounds of pop-brig colors, Rappaport easily lays bare and deflates the mythic bones that meagerly drive countless genre movies. A shot of the pair of actors eating sandwiches and sipping soda is as good a comment as any I've seen on the fragile state of the genre today.

At the same time, however, by opening and closing the film with stills and footage (respectively) from Murnau's *NOSFERATU*, Rappaport notes that we are still intricately drawn to horror films, all of us, dreamworld addicts to the end.

David Bartholomew

Mel Austin and Margaret Smith in "A Vampire's Love" segment of *CASUAL RELATIONS*.



Sara Bay.

**THE DEVIL'S WEDDING NIGHT** A Dimension Pictures Release. 4/73. 85 minutes. In Color. Produced by Ralph Zucker. Directed by Paul Solvay. Screenplay by Ralph Zucker and Alan M. Harris based on an original story by Zucker and Ian Danby. With: Mark Damon, Sara Bay, Miriam Barrios, Frances Davis, Stan Papps.

When we last saw her, Sara Bay—the hotcha star of "la cinema de horror Espanol"—was busy testing the sexual potency of the monster she created as *LADY FRANKENSTEIN*. Now, as Countess Dracula in this new, rather drab European job, she is still concerned with undressing her victims (both male and female) to expose them to her peculiar brand of graveside allure.

Mark Damon works up a good sweat in a dual role: the dedicated archeologist who seeks the all-powerful Nibelungen ring and his wastrel brother who arrives in Transylvania first and runs afoul of the Countess. The color photography is terrible, recalling the days of washed-out TruColor, and it is often difficult to tell which Mark is which. Miss Bay, however, stands out. Bad acting will do it every time.

Robert L. Jerome

**CHARIOTS OF THE GODS** A Sun International Release. 1/74. In Color. 98 minutes. Produced by Gunter Eulau. Directed by Harald Reinl. Originally produced and released in Germany in 1970 as *ERINNERUNGEN AN DIE ZUKUNFT*.

Erich von Däniken's intriguing and revelatory novels have been decently filmed into a generally interesting documentary that is rather cold and dispassionate. The film makes an extremely convincing case for the possibility of extraterrestrial beings visiting earth many years ago, offering one startling bit of factual evidence after another. But the theories are put together without much personality or depth, almost like a dry scientific lecture for laymen. It is edited with a certain amount of skill and precision, but the impact is not very strong in the long run. It makes one think and wonder, but not deeply enough. It just barely whets the appetite, and has a tendency to become over-expository and repetitive. Well-photographed and skillfully put together, the film still needs that extra something that an artful director could have given it, and should have. A fine example of this is the spirit and personality that Toshio Masuda gave to the extensive Buddhist lectures in *THE HUMAN REVOLUTION*. Here, the director serves only as technician, competent, but barely satisfying.

Dale Winogura



# FILM RATINGS

## THE RATINGS

++++ High +++++  
 +++  
 ++  
 +  
 o Average o  
 -  
 --  
 --- Low ---

## TOP RATED FILMS

THE CONVERSATION (3.5)  
 THE EXORCIST (3.0)  
 DON'T LOOK NOW (2.4)  
 MAN ON A SWING (2.3)  
 DAY OF THE DOLPHIN (2.2)  
 ZARDOZ (2.2)  
 FANTASTIC PLANET (2.0)

Only films seen by four or more participants are given an average rating. Of 72 films currently in release, only eight listed above received an average rating of +2.0 or better.

## THE RATERS

BW = Bill Warren  
 DB = David Bartholomew  
 DRS = Dan R. Scapperotti  
 DW = Dale Winogura  
 FSC = Frederick S. Clarke  
 MM = Mick Martin  
 RLJ = Robert L. Jerome  
 TL = Tim Lucas  
 Av. = Average Rating

The following films in release showed no change from their previous listing in the ratings chart and therefore have not been included again. The average rating, if determined, is listed.

CAGED VIRGINS (Jean Rollin)  
 Boxoffice Int'l, 9/73, 80 minutes, color  
 CLONES, THE (Paul Hunt & Lamar Card)  
 Film Makers Int'l, 9/73, 95 minutes, color  
 DEMONS (Toshio Matsumoto)  
 Film Images, 1/74, 135 minutes, black & white  
 GRAND BOUFFE, LA (Marco Ferreri)  
 ABCO, 10/73, 95 minutes, color  
 HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY... LOVE GEORGE  
 Cinema 5, 8/73, 90 minutes, color  
 SILENT NIGHT, BLOOD NIGHT (T. Gershuny)  
 Cannon, 9/73, 87 minutes, color  
 SLAUGHTER HOTEL (Fernando DiLeo)  
 Hallmark, 9/73, 100 minutes, color & scope  
 SOME CALL IT LOVING (James B. Harris)  
 Cine Globe, 11/73, 90 minutes, color  
 WEREWOLF OF WASHINGTON (Milton Ginsburg)  
 Diplomat, 9/73, 90 minutes, color

FILM TITLE	BW	DB	DRS	DW	FSC	MM	RLJ	TL	Av.
ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN (Paul Morrissey) Bryanston, 6/74, 95 minutes, color, scope & 3-D	..	o	..	----	---				-0.2
ARNOLD (George Fenady) Cinerama, 4/74, 94 minutes, color		..					o		
BAT PEOPLE, THE (Jerry Jameson) AIP, 3/74, 94 minutes, color					..	----	o	..	0.0
BEAST MUST DIE, THE (Paul Annett) Cinerama, 4/74, 93 minutes, color & scope	..	..		----		..		..	0.0
BLACKENSTEIN (William A. Levy) L. F. G. Films, 8/73, 92 minutes, color	----							----	
BLAZING SADDLES (Mel Brooks) Warner Bros., 2/74, 94 minutes, color & scope	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	+1.5
BLOOD? (Andy Milligan) Bryanston, 4/74, 69 minutes, color								o	
BLOOD SPATTERED BRIDE, THE (Vincent Aranda) Europix Int'l, 1/74, 83 minutes, color									
CAPTAIN KRONOS, VAMPIRE HUNTER (Brian Clemens) Paramount, 6/74, 91 minutes, color					..			..	
CASUAL RELATIONS (Mark Rappaport) Rappaport, 3/74, 80 minutes, color and black & white		o							
CAT CREATURE, THE (Curtis Harrington) ABC-TV, 12/73, 90 minutes, color			..		..		..	..	-1.0
CHARIOTS OF THE GODS (Harald Reinl) Sun Int'l, 1/74, 98 minutes, color		o		..	o	..			-0.5
CHOSEN SURVIVORS (Sutton Riley) Columbia, 5/74, 99 minutes, color			..					..	
CONVERSATION, THE (Francis Ford Coppola) Paramount, 4/74, 113 minutes, color	----	----		----	----		----	----	-3.5
CRYPT OF THE LIVING DEAD (Ray Danton) Coast Industries, 10/73, 93 minutes, color & scope							o	..	
DARK PLACES (Don Sharp) Cinerama, 5/74, 91 minutes, color		o							
DARK STAR (John Carpenter) Jack H. Harris, 4/74, 83 minutes, color	----			..					
DAY OF THE DOLPHIN (Mike Nichols) Avco-Embassy, 12/73, 104 minutes, color	----	o	..	..	----	----	..	..	-2.2
DEATH WHEELERS (Don Sharp) Scotia Int'l, 10/73, 89 minutes, color	----						o		
DERANGED (Jeff Gillen) AIP, 5/74, 82 minutes, color	..				..				
DIGBY, THE BIGGEST DOG IN THE WORLD (Joseph McGrath) Cinerama, 6/74, 88 minutes, color	..				o			..	
DOCTOR DEATH, SEEKER OF SOULS (Eddie Saeta) Cinerama, 10/73, 93 minutes, color	----				o				1.5
DON QUIXOTE (Rudolph Nureyev & Robert Helpman) Continental, 11/73, 107 minutes, color								..	
DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT (S. F. Brownrigg) Hallmark, 9/73, 95 minutes, color	----	----			..	----	..	----	2.3
DON'T LOOK NOW (Nicholas Roeg) Paramount, 1/74, 105 minutes, color	..	----	..	..	..	----	..	----	-2.4
DRACULA (Dan Curtis) CBS-TV, 2/74, 104 minutes, color	..	----			o	----	..	..	0.0
EXECUTIVE ACTION (David Miller) National General, 11/73, 91 minutes, color	..	..		..	o	..	o		-0.7
EXORCIST, THE (William Friedkin) Warner Bros., 12/73, 121 minutes, color & scope	o	----	..	----	----	----	----	----	-3.0
FANTASTIC PLANET (Rene Laloux) New World, 12/73, 72 minutes, color	----	..		..	..	----	..		-2.0
FRANKENSTEIN & THE MONSTER FROM HELL (Fisher) Paramount, 6/74, 93 minutes, color					o			..	
FRANKENSTEIN: THE TRUE STORY (Jack Smight) NBC-TV, 12/73, 208 minutes, color	----	..	o				..		-1.8
GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD, THE (Gordon Hessler) Columbia, 3/74, 105 minutes, color	----	o	..					..	-1.5
GRAVE OF THE VAMPIRE (John Hayes) Pyramid, 10/73, 95 minutes, color								..	
HEAVY TRAFFIC (Ralph Bakshi) AIP, 8/73, 76 minutes, color	----	..	o	o	----		..	----	-2.0
HEX (Leo Garen) 20th-Fox, 11/73, 93 minutes, color	..								
HOUSE OF THE 7 CORPSES, THE (Paul Harrison) Int'l Amusements, 1/74, 90 minutes, color	----		..						



# FILM RATINGS

# FILM RATINGS

FILM TITLE	BW	DB	DHS	DW	FSC	MM	RLJ	TL	Av.
I DISMEMBER MAMA (Paul Leder) Europix Int'l, 1/74, 81 minutes, color									
IMPULSE (William Greffe) Conqueror Films, 4/74, 93 minutes, color									
IN THE DEVIL'S GARDEN (Sidney Hayers) Hemisphere, 3/74, 90 minutes, color					0				
JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL (Hall Bartlett) Paramount, 12/73, 114 minutes, color & scope				***	***		0		-1.5
KILLING KIND, THE (Curtis Harrington) Media-Cinema, 11/73, 105 minutes, color				0					
LAKE OF DRACULA (Michio Yamamoto) Toho, 8/73, 82 minutes, color & scope		0							
LEGEND OF HILLBILLY JOHN, THE (John Newland) Jack H. Harris, 9/73, 86 minutes, color									
MADHOUSE (Jim Clark) AIP, 3/74, 89 minutes, color					0	***			
MAN ON A SWING (Frank Perry) Paramount, 2/74, 109 minutes, color				***	***	***		***	-2.3
MARK OF THE DEVIL, PART II (Adrian Hovan) Hallmark, 4/74, 90 minutes, color	***					***			
MISTER SUPERINVISIBLE (Antonio Margheriti) K-Tel, 9/73, 91 minutes, color & scope									
MOONCHILD (Alan Gadney) American Films Ltd, 5/74, color				**					
MUTATIONS, THE (Jack Cardiff) Columbia, 6/74, 91 minutes, color									
NAKED APE, THE (Donald Driver) Universal, 12/73, 85 minutes, color				***			0		
NEITHER THE SEA NOR THE SAND (Fred Burnley) Int'l Amusement, 2/74, 92 minutes, color							0		
NIGHT WATCH (Brian G. Hutton) Avco-Embassy, 8/73, 99 minutes, color & scope	0			**			0	**	-0.1
PARTNER (Bernardo Bertolucci) New Yorker Films, 4/74, 105 minutes, color									
PEOPLE TOYS (Sean MacGregor) Cinemat, 5/74, 90 minutes, color								***	
PYX, THE (Harvey Hart) Cinerama, 11/73, 111 minutes, color & scope	0	*	*	**					-1.0
RESURRECTION OF EVE (Artie Mitchell & Jon Fontana) Mitchell Bros, 10/73, 85 minutes, color				***	*				
RHINOCEROS (Tom O'Horgan) Am Film Theatre, 1/74, 104 minutes, color	**	*		***			**	0	-0.6
ROBIN HOOD (Wolfgang Reitherman) Buena Vista, 12/73, 83 minutes, color	**	0	*	**	0	**		**	-1.2
SIDDHARTHA (Conrad Rooks) Columbia, 8/73, 86 minutes, color				***	*		0		1.0
SLEEPER (Woody Allen) United Artists, 12/73, 88 minutes, color	***	***	**	*		***	**	**	-1.9
SON OF DRACULA (Freddie Francis) Cinemat, 4/74, 90 minutes, color						**			
SPECTRE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE, THE (Mohy Quandour) Cinerama, 4/74, 87 minutes, color				**					
SPOOK WHO SAT BY THE DOOR, THE (Ivan Dixon) United Artists, 10/73, 102 minutes, color				***			0	**	
SUGAR HILL (Paul Maslansky) AIP, 2/74, 90 minutes, color			**		0		0	**	0.0
TALES THAT WITNESS MADNESS (Freddie Francis) Paramount, 10/73, 93 minutes, color	*		0		***	*	0	***	-1.0
TERMINAL MAN, THE (Mike Hodges) Warner Bros, 6/74, 107 minutes, color		**		**	**				
TOUCH OF SATAN, THE (Don Henderson) Dundee Prod, 3/74, 87 minutes, color					**		0	**	-0.2
TURN OF THE SCREW (Dan Curtis) ABC-TV, 4/74, 180 minutes, color video-taped	*								
VALERIE AND HER WEEK OF WONDERS (Jaromil Jires) Janus, 3/74, 75 minutes, color		***			***				
W (Richard Quine) Cinerama, 6/74, 95 minutes, color							*		
WESTWORLD (Michael Crichton) MGM, 8/73, 88 minutes, color	**	0	***	**	***	**	*	**	-1.9
ZARDOZ (John Boorman) 20th-Fox, 3/74, 105 minutes, color, scope & stereo	***	**	0	***	***	**	*	**	-2.2

The films listed below, while in release during the rating period, were seen by no one. This is an indication that these films are in very limited release. Some titles are merely new films which have not been in release long enough to appear on the chart, but will be included in the future.

BIBLE! (Wakefield Poole)  
Poolemar Prod, 4/74, 84 minutes, color

BLADE (Ernest Pintoff)  
Joseph Green, 12/73, 90 minutes, color

CASTLE OF FU MANCHU, THE (Jess Franco)  
Int'l Cinema, 4/74, 87 minutes, color & scope

COMPUTER KILLERS  
AIP, 4/74, color

CRAZE (Freddie Francis)  
Warner Bros, 6/74, 96 minutes, color

DEVIL'S NIGHTMARE, THE  
Hemisphere, 3/74, color

DRACULA'S GREAT LOVE (Javier Aguirre)  
Int'l Amusement, 2/74, 85 minutes, color

EXORCISM'S DAUGHTER (Rafael Moreno Alba)  
Nat'l Forum Corp, 5/74, 93 minutes, color

FIFTY FOOT WOMAN  
Int'l Artists, 6/74, color

HERBIE RIDES AGAIN (Robert Stevenson)  
Buena-Vista, 6/74, 89 minutes, color

HOUSE THAT CRIED MURDER, THE  
Unisphere, 11/73, 85 minutes, color

IT'S ALIVE (Larry Cohen)  
Warner Bros, 5/74, color

LAST DAYS OF MAN ON EARTH, THE  
New World, 5/74, color

LEGENDARY CURSE OF LEMORA (R. Blackburn)  
Media Cinema, 7/74, 90 minutes, color

LEGEND OF BLOOD CASTLE  
Film Ventures Int'l, 3/74, 85 minutes, color

LEGEND OF SPIDER FOREST  
New Line, 5/74, 88 minutes, color

LOVE FACTOR  
Film Ventures Int'l, 1/74, 85 minutes, color

MEMORIES WITHIN MISS AGGIE (G. Damiano)  
Inish Kae Ltd, 5/74, 74 minutes, color

NIGHT OF THE DEVIL  
Hallmark, 5/74, 90 minutes, color

NINE LIVES OF FRITZ THE CAT, THE  
AIP, 6/74, 76 minutes, color

PHASE IV (Saul Bass)  
Paramount, 2/74, 91 minutes, color

PIG PEN (Pier Paolo Pasolini)  
New Line, 8/74, 93 minutes, color

PLAYTHING OF THE DEVIL  
Omni, 3/74, 90 minutes, color

SHRIEK OF THE MUTILATED  
Am Films Ltd, 5/74, color

TERROR IN THE WOODS  
AIP, 5/74, color

TERROR ON HALF MOON STREET  
Sunset Int'l, 11/73, 90 minutes, color

VAMPIRE'S NIGHT ORGY, THE (Leon Klimovsky)  
Int'l Amusement, 2/74, 86 min, color & scope

VORTEX CONSPIRACY  
AIP, 7/74, color

WELCOME TO ARROW BEACH (Laurence Harvey)  
Warner Bros, 8/74, 99 minutes, color

WHEN WOMEN LOST THEIR TAILS  
Film Ventures Int'l, 5/74, 95 minutes, color

WICKER MAN, THE (Robin Hardy)  
Warner Bros, 5/74, 97 minutes, color





Look, someone gave me this original pulp magazine, it's called The Fountain of Youth. I could make a Doc Savage movie out of that title, without even following the story.

continued from page 4  
IN ATLANTIS COUNTRY.

CFQ: Will Doc Savage give you an opportunity to demonstrate your specialty—special effects?

PAL: Doc Savage books are full of special effects. Doc Savage invented lots of things which really weren't invented until years after his time, like the Poloroid camera. The fact that he doesn't turn the criminals over to the authorities was a unique concept for the time when the stories were written. Doc Savage, you see, has his own rehabilitation center, the Doc Savage Rehabilitation Center of New York, where he takes the criminals over to the brian surgery makes them over into good citizens. This is very much in line with what people think about criminal rehabilitation today. They want to rehabilitate criminals today, but I'm sure this wasn't the vogue in the '30s and '40s when these stories were written.

CFQ: Are you keeping Doc Savage as a period piece?

PAL: Yes. We do it correctly, we don't hit it hard. We use much of the dialogue of Doc Savage, straight out of the books. It's wonderful. A bit campy today, but it's wonderful. It's honest. It's the way they talked. We have a fine art director, Fred Harper, and he does a beautiful job capturing the style of the mid-'30s. We gave Doc a bronze Cord automobile. He has an answer phone. When he gets a telephone call, after the third ring, a metal arm picks up the receiver and turns it to a square-shaped microphone in the style of the '30s. Then, you hear a record saying, "This is Doc Savage. I'm presently not at home, etc., etc.," and then a turntable starts and cuts a record for the message. I think it's much more charming than today's type of answer phone.

CFQ: That's very consistent in your films, those elements of charm in set design and character.

PAL: I really don't do it consciously. This film reminds me somewhat of my experience on THE TIME MACHINE. When we wrote the first script, we put it in modern times and nothing seemed to work. Everything seemed to work when we put it at the turn of the century, because the hero became a Victorian, and you saw things through his eyes. The audience believed it all the more for it.

You couldn't believe the Doc Savage code if somebody said it today. But coming from Ron Ely, and this proves what a great actor he is, you say, "I don't believe what he says, but I'm with him!" It puts you back to a time when heroes were heroes and men were men. You can't help but be inspired by it.

CFQ: Have you made any basic changes from the book?

PAL: In the book, Doc gets his wealth from a pyramid with lots of gold objects. I wanted to have something more cinematic. I thought of ATLANTIS and DR. LAO with their spectacular eruptions at the end. I came up with the idea of a molten pool of gold, which later erupts like a geyser, which is more spectacular. This is the only basic change we made from the novel.

CFQ: Will there be any miniature

work, such as the pool of gold?

Left: George Pal discusses Doc Savage with an emotion and enthusiasm that belies his total involvement and commitment to his latest project, to bring to the screen the great fantasy character created by the late Kenneth Robeson in the pulp magazines of the '30s and '40s. Right: Pal displays two of his own pre-production sketches of characters Ham and Monk. At 68, Pal is the dean of science fiction film producers. DOC SAVAGE: THE MAN OF BRONZE marks his fourteenth feature film since coming to the genre in 1950 with DESTINATION MOON. (Photos by Dennis S. Johnson)

work, such as the pool of gold?

PAL: No. I don't like to use miniatures when it comes to water, so we shot that lifesize. In miniature, the drops would have been as big as footballs. I don't like to use miniatures unless I have to.

CFQ: How do you work with Mike Anderson and why did you choose him as your director?

PAL: I've always wanted to work with him. When he and I were at MGM, we wanted to do LOGAN'S RUN, but unfortunately it didn't work out. I like his style. He's a sensitive director.

Working with him has been a joy and a pleasure. We went through the story very much in detail before finishing the script and put lots of his ideas into it. I have been on the set practically all the way through, in order to pick up on anything that he may have missed or reversed. He welcomed it, because in that way he used me as a sounding board. I wouldn't mind Michael to direct every picture of mine because we work so well together. I couldn't have directed this picture myself because it wouldn't have been right for the project. As a producer, you must keep an overview.

CFQ: Are you shooting in Panavision?

PAL: No. Neither do most of the Bond pictures. After a few minutes, people forget about it and get involved in the story and the characters.

CFQ: In many of the films that Fred Koenkamp has photographed, such as PATTON and PAPILLON, there is a feeling of scope and depth. Does DOC SAVAGE have this also?

PAL: Yes. Depth goes straightforward, from you to the picture, not sideways.

CFQ: Will the sex content be of a mild-PG quality, or bikini-type G-rated sexuality?

PAL: I don't see how we can miss a G rating. I would like everybody to see this picture, and it's very hard to put something dirty into Doc Savage, or for that matter, real violence. Yes, we have sex in it. On his boat, Captain Seas, the villain, has some of the most beautiful women in the world.

CFQ: There's some talk in film circles that a G rating is like the kiss of death these days.

PAL: Yes, I know, but I don't believe it. Disney certainly built an empire on G and he's still building, doing very well with G pictures. Of course, you can say, well, that's Disney, but there are other producers too. I think that SOUNDER did very well, a very honest G picture. DOC SAVAGE has lots of excitement, thrills, and adventure, so it's not your typical G picture.

We'll have a certain amount of sex in DOC SAVAGE, but we don't want to get him rolling around in bed. We won't have that. That's the only thing that makes a Bond picture GP rather than G, it's when they go overboard with sex. I don't think a little sex will offend. These are adventure movies. I want to be true to Doc Savage. He doesn't drink, he doesn't smoke, he's the arch-enemy of evil. I think people are ready for a real hero.

OCFQ







# NEWS AND NOTES

## SENSE OF WONDER

Welcome to the eleventh issue of CINEFANTASTIQUE (sin-eh-faun-tass-teek'), the magazine with a "sense of wonder," devoted to the examination of horror, fantasy and science fiction in the cinema. Cinefantastique is a genre that has thrived from the very beginnings of motion pictures, ever since the great Melies focused his camera on magic tricks instead of passing motor cars. The vitality the genre has shown over the years derives from the fact that cinefantastique, more so than any other form, makes use of the cinema's special ability to create a convincing yet wondrous world of unreality. It is in the genre's ability to take the viewer to fantastic worlds, on strange journeys and through wondrous adventures that makes it a perennial favorite of audiences and allows it to fulfill the true potential embodied in Lumiere's Magic Lantern. The genre flourishes today as ever, with important films like THE EXORCIST, ZARDOZ and FANTASTIC PLANET to capture the public imagination. Each of these films is focused upon in this issue of CINEFANTASTIQUE, in our continuing effort to chronicle and record the state of the art as it exists today.

Charles Derry provides our feature article this issue, called "The Horror of Personality," in which he defines and examines the horror of personality film, a sub-genre of the horror film so named for its preoccupation with aberrant psychology. Most of us find no problem in placing Hitchcock's PSYCHO, the film which really started it all, squarely in the genre. Many, however, will find great difficulty in categorizing other horror of personality films like LADY IN A CAGE or PRETTY POISON as horror films. This tendency to exclude horror of personality films from the genre stems from an incorrect and unnecessarily narrow definition of the horror film itself. It is quite surprising to hear directors like William Friedkin and Curtis Harrington discuss the genre in interviews this issue and state: "horror films—I haven't made any!" The somewhat popular but totally erroneous opinion that horror films must have a "monster" and must be about the "supernatural" is rampant even among the creators of film. In his article, Derry clearly illustrates that the horror of personality films are direct descendants of Frankenstein and Dracula, and part of the horror film corpus in theme as well as ancestry. Accompanying Derry's anal-

ysis of the horror of personality genre are interviews with three directors who have worked in the genre: Robert Aldrich, William Castle and Curtis Harrington. Derry has provided a definitive picture of the evolution that social change has wrought upon the face of modern horror films and shows that while they frighten us as always, they also resonate with new and disturbing implications.

William Crouch provides our feature interview this issue with director William Friedkin, discussing THE EXORCIST, a topic dominating most film conversations these days whether among genre enthusiasts or not. Friedkin is quite pleased with the film and the attention it has, deservedly, brought to him, however, when one comes to understand Friedkin's own concept of the film and what he intended to do with it this satisfaction seems almost surprising. Certainly audiences are not seeing the film as Friedkin sees it, as a realistic depiction of unexplainable events. The film is realistic certainly, and the events that it depicts are just as certainly not unexplainable: the explanation is the clear, driving force behind the film's every fiber, the explanation is the supernatural phenomenon of demonic possession. And THE EXORCIST is a horror film purely and simply, a cathartic struggle between overwhelming forces of good and evil that dwarf man the individual. That Friedkin fails to grasp the core significance of his own film only shows that like other artists who create on an intuitive level, he is perhaps the least qualified to interpret his own work.

George Pal is back at work at last, after a respite of more than six years since THE POWER, doing best what he loves best, producing remarkable fantasy films for the wonderment and amusement of us all. The bulk of our interview with him in this issue discussing his forthcoming Warner Bros film, DOC SAVAGE: THE MAN OF BRONZE, was conducted nearly two years ago in Chicago as part of the material for the second installment of Dennis S. Johnson's career article "The Five Faces of George Pal" (see Vol 1 No 4), which we hope to have in publication soon. At the time, Pal seemed remarkably confident and assured for a producer who had, in recent years, seen so many of his worthy projects abandoned due to lack of studio interest and financing, among them Philip Wylie's THE DISAPPEARANCE, LOGAN'S RUN, based on the novel by William Nolan, and WHEN THE SLEEPER WAKES, an H. G. Wells production that had languished for years at AIP. When asked whether he was under any pressure to conclude a film deal for the Doc Savage material he replied: "No, the worst that can happen is that I'll have to pay out more money to extend my rights. I don't need the money. I'm committed to the project emotionally, not financially." His persistence and patience in seeking out the right deal has paid off in coming to terms with Warner Bros, a studio responsible recently for a string of excellent and highly successful genre films. Dale Winogura met with Pal in Hollywood to update the material and be treated to a screening of ten minutes of clips from the new film which Dale described as "evidencing those elements of charm, action, character and suspense that highlight Pal's best work."

Rounding out the issue is David Bartholomew's interview with director James B. Harris, a former filmmaking associate to Stanley Kubrick, whose new genre film, SOME CALL IT LOVING, is a kinky modernization of the elements of the Sleeping Beauty fairy tale that has all but disappeared from release due to the harsh reception provided the film by the New York critics. Harris' film is not the first, and certainly not the last, to be downed in New York.



# SLEEPING BEAUTY is a whore!

Director James B. Harris discusses his new film *SOME CALL IT LOVING*, a morbidly kinky modernization of the classic fairy tale that has all but disappeared due to bad reviews, bad boxoffice and bad luck.

James B. Harris was born in New York on August 3, 1928, and was raised in Long Branch, New Jersey. He studied music briefly in the Julliard School in an attempt to realize his dream of being a jazz drummer. He entered the motion picture business in 1947 by joining a film exporting company and then entered film distribution (as an assistant sales manager) in 1948 with Realart Pictures. A year later, Harris and a few others (including David L. Wolper) formed Flamingo Films, a company set up to distribute films to TV. His career was interrupted by a stay in the Army Signal Corps during the Korean War years where he first became interested in making films. Soon after, Harris met a then unknown director Stanley Kubrick, and the pair decided to combine friendship with business by incorporating Harris-Kubrick Productions in 1954. With Kubrick directing, Harris produced their first film together, *THE KILLING* (1956), followed by *PATHS OF GLORY* (1958) and *LOLITA* (1962). The partnership broke off amicably as *DR. STRANGE-LOVE* was being planned, since Kubrick desired to produce his own films and Harris wanted to try directing. Harris' first feature was *THE BEDFORD INCIDENT* in 1965. *SOME CALL IT LOVING* (1973) is his second film.



James B. Harris

Interview  
conducted  
by  
David  
Bartholomew

*SOME CALL IT LOVING* played at the 1973 Cannes Film Festival and later opened in Paris to generally ecstatic reviews from critics like Michael Ciment, Jonathan Rosenbaum and Jean Domarchi. The U.S. trade reviews were less enthusiastic but still favorable, noting that the film would be a hard-sell. It opened in New York at a small East side art house on November 16. It was promptly mauled by the regular critics (12 negative out of 13, and some viciously so). I spoke to James B. Harris after most of the reviews had appeared. He was understandably agitated, but he expressed complete faith in his distributor Cine-Globe and recognized their faith in him considering the absurdly high cost—from \$40-to-\$50,000 according to *Variety*—of opening a "little" film in New York, a necessity for obtaining the reviews to launch the film nationally. With it all, Harris seemed hopeful, full of energy, and, of course, ready to talk about the problems with his new film and his early career.

CFQ: What interested you in the John Collier story on which you based *SOME CALL IT LOVING*?

HARRIS: Mainly just the framework, the bizarre idea of someone buying a "sleeping beauty" in a sideshow carnival, waking her up, becoming disillusioned, and putting her back to sleep. The disillusionment in the Collier story stemmed from a disappointment in the object not turning out as had been envisioned—a theme explored in *LOLITA*. But I think that's too pat—it's too easy to go around blaming others for what are, in effect, your own shortcomings. What interested me was that if you could have everything exactly the way you wanted, and that someone could be everything you're looking for, then if it doesn't work, it must be something wrong with yourself. That disillusionment was what I was after, discovering that within you lies the block that prevents you from accomplishing your dreams.

CFQ: How long did you have the rights to the story?

HARRIS: Strangely enough, I had been interested in the story as far back as 1963-4, about the time I had first started talking to Stanley about directing films. I told him about the Collier property—and he liked the story—but I couldn't acquire it because Collier wouldn't sell it at that point. Then I tried again in the early '70s and was surprised to find that now they would entertain the idea. So the interest goes back ten years, but actually acquiring the property was fairly recent.

CFQ: How did you happen to begin working with Stanley Kubrick?

HARRIS: I met Stanley through a mutual friend when we were both 25. I had seen some of Stanley's earlier work and thought that he had the makings of a fantastic director. Since it was my desire to produce films, we

got together to discuss the possibilities of working as a team, where I could relieve him of all of the responsibilities that would take him away from full concentration on direction. He jumped at the opportunity to work with a contemporary who felt as he did about film. I was able to make a contribution in terms of financing, because I had been successful in television distribution, so I could elevate his search for properties away from having to find something for nothing. In other words, we could go out and buy a good book if we saw it. Also I took over the administrative work so he could fully concentrate on directing. And the first film that we did, *THE KILLING* (1956), seemed to have worked. I think it was far superior work to the earlier two that he did, which were *KILLER'S KISS* (1955) and *FEAR AND DESIRE* (1953). These films showed his potential, of course, although I felt he hadn't really reached his potential that he could with our arrangement. When he looks back on those films, he thinks of them mainly as a learning process. Although they were a great accomplishment for a young man who had to do it all himself.

CFQ: Did Kubrick give you your encouragement to direct?

HARRIS: Right, that's where it all came from. Having been exposed to Stanley for 7 or 8 years and three films, I felt I had learned an awful lot. I thought that we had a coincidence of ideas and approaches and concepts of film and subjects that interested us both. When I explained to him that I felt somewhat frustrated and that I felt I could direct, and that I'd like to have a crack at it, he was the one who pushed me into it. He said that we had never really made a bad film together, and he believed that we could both make good films on our own. If I was looking for more rewards and fulfillment, then it would come from directing films.

CFQ: You split up with Kubrick after having begun to set up *DR. STRANGE-LOVE*.

HARRIS: Yes, we had put that deal together, but it became a choice of going back to England for another year of producing a film, because we had just done *LOLITA* over there, or trying to put something together that I could direct. And I felt that another year of postponing what I really wanted to do was too much to take. All I needed was Stanley's encouragement, which he gave me wholeheartedly. I thank him for it very much because I feel that he was right. Directing is the only way to be totally fulfilled in dealing with film. Of course, you want to make what you want to make, that's another problem. If you want to join-up with the deal-making aspects of film rather than filmmaking and just do anything to make a film, that means that you become a director for hire, and you'd be dealing with subjects that don't really interest you. That involves only the

mechanical process of getting it on film to pick up a big pay check. You don't really conceive the whole idea of the film and are merely handed somebody else's conception and you are the mechanic who gets it on film because they may have a sense of how to stage things and how to set up the camera. That, to me, isn't really the reward. The reward comes from being a part of the development of the whole idea, something that you wake up every morning with needing to explore and get on film.

CFQ: But that seems to be the way American films are made, by committee.

HARRIS: Yeah, and Stanley and I never did that. We always started with some basic material that intrigued us and developed it and went right through until the completion of the picture. No one ever came to us with a screenplay and paid us a salary to put it on film. It's a matter of finding material that coincides with what you're really interested in. Take Stanley's thermonuclear dilemma. He was interested in that long before he came across (Peter Bryant's) *Red Alert*, which was the basic material for *DR. STRANGELOVE*.

CFQ: The first film you directed was also about thermonuclear disaster, *THE BEDFORD INCIDENT* (1965). Why didn't you write the script as well?

HARRIS: I felt that it was very important to be able to break in as a major-league director, because once you are put into a single posture, like producing, it's very difficult to get out of that posture. And I had tried to put some smaller films together originally, but I found that totally impossible to do. Then I thought, my God, I've been producing major movies, probably it would be easier to make a major film. And I realized that I had to get all the ingredients together in order to raise the financing. I too wanted to make a statement that we shouldn't put atomic weapons in the hands of right-wing field commanders and came across *The Bedford Incident* (novel by Mark Rascovitch). I felt that in order to interest stars and financing possibilities, I should have a "name" writer doing the screenplay. I had a respect for Jim Poe as a writer, and Richard Widmark was interested from the very beginning, and Sidney Potier came into it since he had worked with Poe on *LIES OF THE FIELD*, which won him the Academy Award. And everything just added up to a perfect package.

CFQ: *DR. STRANGELOVE* and your film have similarities: both pivot on insane actions, but in Kubrick's insane society you may expect them, whereas you show them as a human reaction. The tension on the destroyer is unnatural; the human side breaks through and is responsible for the holocaust.

HARRIS: Right, I don't know if it was because I was so close to Stanley and I didn't want to be accused of imitation, but I felt the important thing was





He who  
wakes the  
Sleeping  
Beauty is in  
danger of  
awakening  
himself.



Scenes from **SOME CALL IT LOVING**, the second film by director James B. Harris. Top: In a seedy carnival sideshow, Robert (Zalman King) stands transfixed before Jennifer, the Sleeping Beauty (Tisa Farrow). Bottom: Time lost and time remembered, the end of innocence and continuation of illusion: Robert and Jennifer dance to a tune from a glowing jukebox in his ornate house by the sea.



making the point, that nobody can win in a situation like that and therefore, it's very dangerous to play around with those things. Since Stanley had already done a similar thing in comedy, I thought that I shouldn't inject a style contrary to the basic material, which was realistic. It worked in the novel and I thought it would work on film, as long as I could make the atmosphere come to life, to make it as real as possible.

CFQ: Had you had any naval experience?

HARRIS: No. What I did was go with the writer aboard an American destroyer for five days, and I just took pictures of everything I could sneak around and take without their catching me. I studied the people and got a pretty good idea of how the modern electronic Navy works.

CFQ: The scene in which MacArthur fires the torpedo is really shocking.

HARRIS: And it was fraught with the worst kind of possibilities in that it could almost be laughable because it was really a play on words. When the German advisor warns Widmark that he shouldn't be provoking the submarine, Widmark says to Eric Portman, "Don't worry, Commander, if he fires one, I'll fire one." And then MacArthur says, "Fire One!" mistaking it for a command. So it's a total misunderstanding that could only develop by somebody being broken down the whole picture. I always worried whether people would laugh at that moment, because it is almost comical. I remember Stanley advising me when I let him read the screenplay before I made the film. He said, "Be careful of this one." I guess coming off DR. STRANGELOVE he saw the comic aspect of things and said, "Be careful because it could be a big laugh and it's the key to the whole film."

CFQ: When your new film *SOME CALL IT LOVING* opened in New York it was not received well at all, yet the Paris critics, both at Cannes and later when the film opened commercially in Paris, raved. One, Michael Ciment, even went so far as to claim, "I don't believe I have seen anything like this in the history of cinema. There is no comparison." What happened?

HARRIS: I don't know. When you are the recipient of bad reviews you resent it very much. Especially reviews that are more than negative: there's almost a hatred or vindictiveness to them. My only real beef with critics, and this goes beyond film to all the other arts, is that sometimes critics tend to use other people's works of art as a vehicle to show off themselves. Media critics—radio and TV especially—seem to be around more to entertain than to criticize responsibly. One does wonder how some of the critics here haven't found at least some of the elements of the film of value that others have. I wonder how one set of critics can be so right and another so wrong. Both sets seemed unanimous. Here, they keep using the word "pretentious." One does not mind so much if they would state why a film failed, and not just that it did.

CFQ: Sometimes there's a reaction in New York against films that have a solid reputation elsewhere—not that they gun for you—it's just that you may have to prove yourself harder to them.

HARRIS: I think there will be a critical rebuttal taking place later. I don't want to pick a fight, but intimidation works both ways. Maybe there is a genuine difference between the American and European sensibility, I don't know. I just am shocked and disappointed that they could not respond to the film here.

CFQ: I was impressed by the film's opening where Robert (Zalman King) wanders through the circus. The misty lighting and camera movements build a sense of menace in the setting. It sets the stage for the whole film. You sig-

## SOME CALL IT LOVING

...about as close as we are going to get to a modern fairy tale.

*SOME CALL IT LOVING* A CineGlobe Release. 11/73. 103 minutes. In Technicolor. A Two World Films Presentation. Produced and directed by James B. Harris. Associate producer, Ramzi Thomas. Screenplay by James B. Harris. Based on the short story "Sleeping Beauty" by John Collier. Director of photography, Mario Tosi. Edited by Paul Jasiukonis. Music composed and conducted by Richard Hazard. "Sleeping Beauty Theme" by Bob Harris. Costumes by Jax. Sculptures by Patricia Knop. "The Very Thought of You" Vocal by Nat King Cole.

Robert Troy ..... Zalman King  
Scarlett ..... Carol White  
Jennifer ..... Tisa Farrow  
Jeff ..... Richard Pryor  
Angelica ..... Veronica Anderson  
Carnival Doctor ..... Logan Ramsey  
Cheerleader ..... Brandy Herred  
Carnival Nurse ..... Pat Priest  
Mortician ..... Ed Rue  
Bartender ..... Joseph DeMeo

Robert (Zalman King), a young jazz musician, stumbles upon a "Sleeping Beauty" sideshow at a tacky carnival. As part of the "act," a barker sells the opportunity to kiss the still girl for a dollar. Later, for a larger sum, he offers to "step outside" the tent for a while. Impulsively, Robert buys the girl and takes her, still unconscious, back to a seaside mansion where he lives with Scarlett (Carol White) and a servant Angelica (Veronica Anderson). Since the girl, named Jennifer (Tisa Farrow), is merely drugged, she soon awakes, and Robert finds that she has no memory nor any awareness of what has happened to her. With the help and sometimes hindrance of the other two women, Robert tries to develop her into the idealized girl of his dreams, his perfect mate. The nightclub where Robert plays his sax nightly is a hangout of his friend Jeff (Richard Pryor), a perpetually drugged freak who tragically depends on Robert for food and money and care. His brain slowly eroding, he represents Robert's sole responsibility in life. Robert's plans for Jennifer, however, simply do not work out; she is changing in ways, aided by Scarlett, that Robert cannot accept because they are not part of his fantasy view of her. When his last emotional tie breaks with Jeff's death, Robert tries to run away dragging Jennifer along, but he returns disillusioned and defeated. He puts Jennifer back under the sleeping drug the original huckster used, and the final scenes of the film find Robert running a similar sideshow in a similar rundown carnival, repeating the same forlorn banter about waking the "Sleeping Beauty."

Thus *SOME CALL IT LOVING* has a semblance of a plot, which is all that filmmaker James B. Harris has derived from the Collier short story, but the film is largely a series of dialogues and physical confrontations of two or more characters, one of whom is always gratifying either his own fantasy or that of another. The characters bounce off each other—or they mirror each other. They alternately hate and love each other. Scarlett runs the household for Robert and amuses him by setting up "games"—like the opening funeral—for them to play. Angelica, silent and compliant, is merely an actress, a role-player: one feels at a former time she was initiated into the house like Jennifer, as a toy for Robert. She now serves Scarlett. (Despite the cries of chauvinism raised against the film, abetted by one extraneous scene involving a bottomless nightclub waitress, the film's view of women is dominant and fascinating.) Like Jennifer, Jeff is completely dis-connected; continually stoned and zonked-crazy, his brain shred-

ding, he represents the ultimate conclusion of an unattached, emotionally stunted life like Robert's. Like Jennifer, all of the characters have neither pasts nor futures, only the present. The film slowly builds a complex scheme of actions and interactions of these characters in which all sense of reality, apart from physical settings, is lost. Even in the midst of Jeff's funeral late in the film, we are not at first sure that it is not simply just another game.

The film tries very hard to say something meaningful about the dangerous paths we take to satisfy our fantasies, that it is perhaps safer to keep them swirling through the mind, unrealized. As soon as we involve other people in them, we are asking for trouble. Indeed, Robert seems most at peace, challenging himself, satisfying himself, while blowing his sax riffs in the nightclub. The film is intensely personal, perhaps too much so, for if Harris feels close to Robert's plight, he has let slip past him a weak and uninvolved performance from Zalman King. There is no force to him and thus there is a vacuum at the film's center; one begins to see Robert's cut-off, floating quality as simple masochism. Certainly this is part of the film's point, but it makes for a film difficult to stay close to.

*SOME CALL IT LOVING* is often bewildering and the decadence of this houseful of standard California freaks—tap-dancing nuns included—seems a bit forced and showy. Actually there are only the shards of a movie here: it is as if the dream we are watching is periodically interrupted by sleep. If the characters seem remote from us, the film communicates a lushly romantic feeling, largely the work of a fine cinematographer Mario Tosi (who also shot *FROGS* and *OUTSIDE IN*). In its soft colors and brilliant use of lighting, the film is covered by an almost palpable air of eroticism. Although it never does, *SOME CALL IT LOVING* always appears on the verge of erupting.

Despite its faults, Harris' film is about as close as we are going to get to a modern fairy tale. He has taken the "Sleeping Beauty" theme one step too far, exploded it, and now picks through the pieces in close examination. The happy ending is twisted cruelly; cynicism and illusion win in this fairyland. It is this, and not the equally de-humanizing technology of 2001, that points the way to our future.

With bad reviews and no word-of-mouth in operation, *SOME CALL IT LOVING* did not finish a third week in its New York City opening. Late in December, 1973, it played by invitation at the London Film Festival, but it passed almost unnoticed by the British critics and as of this writing has not opened commercially. In January, 1974, CineGlobe, the film's American distributor (the distribution arm of TransAmerica), declared bankruptcy, thus freezing the film and several others in the limbo of complicated legal matters, a situation that could take years to settle. No one at the CineGlobe offices could be roused to talk about the film and its future, which is probably now as bleak as that of many films in the RKO library when that firm folded in 1953. Most likely, it will turn up on TV in a few years, but in what mutilated form we can only cynically guess.

David Bartholomew

Scenes from *SOME CALL IT LOVING*, written and directed by James B. Harris and based on the John Collier short story "Sleeping Beauty." Top: Jennifer (Tisa Farrow) still asleep in the room Robert has prepared for her. Bottom: The bizarre games people play: Scarlett (Carol White) and Angelica (Veronica Anderson) as nuns.







nal that you are working in the imagination and that natural laws simply may not operate here.

HARRIS: But I find that people just don't listen. In the prologue, we indicate quite clearly how the game-playing fits the needs of Robert. I had to write that opening speech to fit the style of the whole movie, its photography and music. It is an elegant speech, and maybe it comes too early in the film when people may still be settling in their seats or thinking about something else.

Scarlett (Carol White) states in the prologue that she wears the widow's costume as part of a game, that the game has been played before, and undoubtedly will be played again and again, and that she has never questioned the bizarre nature of the roles she's required to play for Robert. She realizes that his love for her is necessary, and that that love depends on the creation of charades, of games. That there is a real need for deep fantasies in this person, hence the games and costumes and music and erotic decor in order to be stimulated. Imagine then, when this type of character stumbles across a "sleeping beauty..."

CFQ: In the sideshow, the barker actually says what is going to happen: "He who wakes the Sleeping Beauty is in danger of awakening himself."

HARRIS: Right. Robert is enticed by women who put themselves, or who can be put, like Scarlett, into whorish postures. This is illustrated in the prologue, with Robert becoming the lover of a widow on the day of the funeral. No one has died, of course, it is merely a game in which they feed each other pre-set dialogue. But Scarlett functions as a whore. Then imagine what goes through Robert's mind when he finds the sideshow in the carnival. He sees that for a dollar, men can step up and kiss her. When he goes backstage and asks for a private audience with her, and he finds that for \$50 the barker will step outside, he must know that this is not the first time this has happened. In effect, the barker is using her as a whore. Underneath everything, this really appeals to Robert. His surface motive may be very altruistic, to take this girl away from this horrible atmosphere and terrible people. But underneath, he's really excited by it all, as the biggest game of all.

CFQ: This is where the critics get their charge against you of male chauvinism, the male fantasy of owning a woman and, more than that, of having her start out as a *tabula rasa* from which you can make whatever you want.

HARRIS: But what they can't appreciate is that it's not that uncommon a fantasy, that if you can make someone into whatever you want, you might just make them into a whore, and be stimulated by it. Now this is being interpreted as being so obscure that they not only don't get it, but if they do get it, they find it so abhorrent, that they dismiss it. I mean, I may be absolutely nuts or something, but I don't feel that is that uncommon a fantasy.

CFQ: I think the main charge of chauvinism came from the scene where Robert works out his fantasy of turning the nude barmaid into a cheerleader, and the Russ Meyer-style of shooting you chose.

HARRIS: Well, then again, you can't tell me that when people watch cheerleaders and drum majorettes they don't have those kinds of ideas. I really can't believe that so many people are interested in baton-twirling!

CFQ: Are you planning on making any changes when you open the film in England?

HARRIS: No, not unless the English critics feel exactly as do the New York critics. If they do, I would then have to examine the possibility of adding a running narration to the picture to make it clear, because I feel that if people were able to totally understand

what is going on, they would not have responded the way they did. Maybe there's a lack of communication here, that it's too subtle, maybe even too sophisticated for the New York critics.

CFQ: The film is ambiguous to a certain extent, but I find that a virtue. Some filmmakers cut out their characters too clearly.

HARRIS: I've had such arguments about this. I try to make my films for people who feel about films as I do. And I always enjoy participation in a film. I don't want things totally explained to me. I want the freedom to be able to interpret. I want clues. But so many people have argued that you must make it more clear. I may be paying a big price for making my film as I have, but I still feel that making films as honestly and truthfully as you feel is more important than boxoffice.

CFQ: Your film is really beautifully photographed. How did you choose cinematographer Mario Tosi?

HARRIS: I had just seen some of his work, several of his commercials and low-budget pictures. I was able to imagine that if he had the time to light carefully and not rush through a picture as he has always been forced to do that he could do exactly what I wanted. I think he did a fantastic job, especially with his lighting. Lighting outside of the studio is very difficult. I mean, when we do those 1800 pans, where do you put the lights? We're shooting ceilings and there are no rafters or overhead lighting. We have to hide all the lights and use little ones—we used no arcs or bruts in the film.

CFQ: One scene in particular, with Robert and Jennifer (Tisa Farrow) dancing and the jukebox in the background playing the Nat Cole tune, and the camera does that very long and slow tracking-in movement, is probably the most elegant I've seen in a long time. It also has a sense of innocence about it, of time lost, that works thematically for you.

HARRIS: Yeah, I love that shot, and I can just imagine the restlessness of people who aren't caught up in the film. It is a violation of the kind of pace that we've come to expect in American films. Even the critics refused to see what we were trying to do with it.

CFQ: Why did you decide to write the screenplay yourself?

HARRIS: I had made several attempts with other writers, but it just didn't work out. It took me a while to find out exactly how I wanted to approach it. It finally dawned on me that if we're going to be dealing with a fantasy, with a totally unbelievable premise, that we'd have to do the whole picture in a style with a dream-like quality. I think that was the error in the film's original development. And I really think this is the problem with the critics, the style of the film.

People are so used to having "real" films come out of America, that the minute they see my premise, it is so unbelievable to them that they fail to stay with it, and they reject it before it really gets started. They don't see that it's an allegory with symbols working through it, of making someone into your own image, of molding someone into exactly what you want, of having the opportunity to explore what you really want, and will it come back to destroy you when you're through. You know, it really is a horror story. It is the creation of a monster, in a sense, that comes back to destroy you, on an intellectual level and on a psychological level. Suppose I had mechanically manufactured this creature and let it loose.

CFQ: Then you would have made a fortune...

HARRIS: Yeah, I guess so (laughter) Well, it's not over yet. The jury's still out. Maybe I'm being a dreamer, but I have faith, and I don't really feel that this film has been discovered yet.

OCFQO



continued from page 28

Zed hides within the mouth of Zardoz to seek the truth. Zed shoots the man running the idol ("I looked behind the mask! I saw the truth!"), which flies back to the Vortex, where Zed investigates further, and is captured by the Eternals, who look upon him as less than human. They refer to him as "it" and perform humiliating experiments on him, such as researching his capacity for erections, a lost art in the Vortex, since sex has fallen into desuetude. Thus Zed and the Eternals seek the truth about one another simultaneously. Although the Eternals employ Exterminators, they have never had an opportunity to study one close at hand. A thorough examination conducted by May, one of the Eternal scientists, establishes that Zed is mentally and physically superior to the denizens of the Vortex. The Renegades look upon Zed as a liberator; they feel that his violent nature represents death, and they entreat him to release them from the bonds of life. To the Apathetics, whom he releases from their lethargy, he represents life. With the help of May, he acquires the collective knowledge of the Vortex. He then discovers the flaw in the crystal, causing time to run backwards briefly, and destroying the social fabric of the Vortex. A band of Exterminators enter the Vortex and slaughter the Eternals, Renegades, and Apathetics, who exult in their release from life. Zed, however, escapes with Consuella, one of the Eternal women, and the film's finale is a series of dissolves in which we see them growing older, Consuella giving birth, the growth of their son, and their death, with the implication that the natural order of life has been re-established.

So much for the plot. What does it all mean? First of all, Boorman deals perceptively with our ambivalent attitudes towards life and death. On the one hand, we seek to preserve life, to extend the life expectancy, to send the death rate down; on the other hand, life has become progressively more mechanistic and less organic. Eternal youth is really antithetical to life: without death, life comes to a standstill. Within the Vortex, the Eternals employ aging to punish the Renegades, who are bedizened in wedding apparel—a noteworthy counterpoint, since weddings are an affirmation of life, or fertility rites rendered socially acceptable. The Eternals refer to their domain as "an oasis from the Dark Ages," an ironic statement, since the Eternals live in the most stagnant society imaginable. Their society literally needs some new blood. One of the Eternals says they have no need for "Gods, goddesses, kings, queens...they all died of boredom." Although social turbulence is a hallmark of the twentieth century, Boorman is saying that such turmoil is preferable to stagnation.

The obsolescence of sex and childbirth have emancipated women of the Vortex from their biological roles. In sheer numbers, there are more female than male Eternals, which should not be surprising, since women live longer than men. The vaginal connotations of the term "Vortex" should be obvious. Particularly notable is the "hardening of the hearts" the women have undergone. No one cracks a smile in the Vortex. When women behave so clinically and impersonally, then it is evident that the mechanistic has finally triumphed over the organic. Significantly, the men within the Vortex are impotent. For Boorman, barrenness, impotence, and social stagnation are the ultimate result of emancipation. Though the Eternals live in a bountiful, verdant land, sexual and social sterility are the dominant factors. The washed-out color photography accurately conveys the essential drabness of what appears to be an Edenic existence.

Although the Eternals are egalitarian (literally "one mind"), they practice genocide and colonialism. Strangely enough, when the Eternals alter their policy from decimation to enslavement of the Brutals, this changeover parallels a similar revolution of ancient times: a historian could argue that the birth of slavery was a step up from the slaughter of prisoners. The Eternals consider the Brutals mere animals. When Zed relives a painful memory, an Eternal remarks, "Of course, you can't compare their feelings with ours." Reminiscent of racism are the simultaneous feelings of superiority and fear the Eternals harbor towards Zed. One recalls the paranoia with which

white supremacists utter the phrases, "yellow peril" and "black flood." In psychoanalytic terms, one could find parallels with the ego's fear of being swamped by the Id: in physiological terms, of the more recently evolved cerebrum's fear of the more primitive cerebellum; in anthropological terms, of Cro-Magnon Man's revulsion towards Neanderthal Man (for a deeper study of these conflicts, see Stan Gooch's analysis of personality in *Total Man*). As Freud postulated, the unconscious is far more powerful than the conscious, and the Eternals, without the benefit of sleep or death, live in a world of perpetual consciousness. They are understandably wary of the atavistic stranger in their midst.

The fundamental split in the human psyche is borne out in the division of society: the Eternals are cerebral, the Brutals are physical. The Exterminators are futuristic policemen, essentially lower class and given to violent behavior, but still more privileged than those they beat up. One can also detect a parallel between the commands of Zardoz and official sanction of slaughter and slavery by established religions. Like many ancient and some not-so-ancient warriors, the Exterminators believe they are fulfilling God's will.

Although ZARDOZ has many similarities to other futuristic science fiction films, it also derives from (and at times is almost a satire of) the numerous Italian films dealing with super heroes, those liberators of slaves and champions of the oppressed. The Exterminators' costumes are reminiscent of the gladiatorial attire worn by the likes of Steve Reeves and Don Vadis. One also thinks of numerous westerns (*A FISTFUL OF DOLLARS*, *HIGH PLAINS DRIFTER*, and *WELCOME TO HARD TIMES*, to name a few) in which a catalytic stranger rides into town, shakes things up, then leaves the town completely different from how he found it.

Predictably, the cinematographer, art director, costume designer, hair stylist, make-up artists, and special effects men have a field day with ZARDOZ. Characterizations are somewhat lacking, but the fault is endemic to the genre. Boorman and other futurists want to explore man collectively, not man individually; hence characterizations would only detract from their aims.

At its best ZARDOZ has the quality of a dream. Disjointed time sequences aid this other-worldly effect, though such curious spatial and temporal couplings often leave one confused. Visually the film is intriguing (ZARDOZ will probably be the most popular movie among drug freaks since 2001); particularly arresting are sequences in which Zed's memory is played back for the Eternals, another in which Zed is bombarded by the collective knowledge of the Vortex, and a third, in which he finds himself within the master crystal, the interior of which is portrayed as a collage of mirrors. The fun house sequences in *LADY FROM SHANGHAI* and *GUNN* immediately come to mind.

The value of Boorman's messages can be debated, but that he has created a well-integrated vision of the present/future cannot be denied. Boorman's major fault is his self-conscious striving for significance—which vitiated *HELL IN THE PACIFIC* and *DELIVERANCE*. His *POINT BLANK*, an exercise in style with a run of the mill gangster story, remains his most memorable achievement. Hand in hand with Boorman's striving for significance is his striving to make a name for himself of equal weight with the likes of Bergman and Fellini. His leaden self-consciousness is no worse than theirs, but he would do better to relax and make films and let the acclaim fall where it may. That's the safest route to the empyreans of film directorship.

Frank Jackson

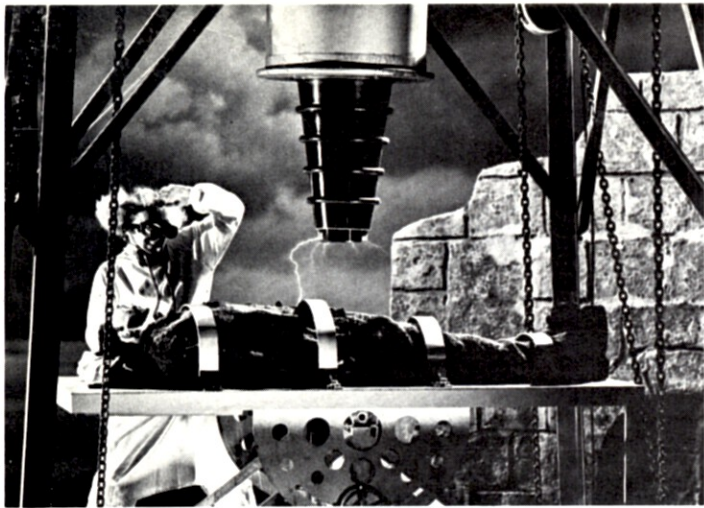
Scenes from ZARDOZ, currently in release from 20th Century-Fox. Top: Zardoz, a mobile stone god machine spews forth guns and dogma for the Brutals of the outside world to go forth and depopulate the Earth. Right: Sean Connery as Zed, a Brutal who penetrates within and learns the secret of Zardoz. Middle: Zed and Consuella grow old, die, and decompose before our eyes in a highly symbolic sequence that ends the film. Left: Sean Connery and director John Boorman during location filming in Ireland.











## COMING

**THE BARONY** is to be filming in October for release by Warner Bros. The original science-fiction drama written by director Robert Clouse will star Yul Brynner, who made the first science fiction film of his long career only last year for Michael Crichton, the highly successful MGM release of **WESTWORLD**. The film is being produced by Fred Weintraub and Paul Heller and depicts the drama of survival in the 21st century...

**CAVES OF STEEL** is being adapted by screenwriter Frank Pierson from the science fiction novel by Isaac Asimov. Gerald Ayres will produce the film for release by Columbia Pictures. Perhaps Asimov's sad neglect by Hollywood is over at last...

**CLEARWATER** is in pre-production phases at Universal Pictures for producer Hal Barwood. The script by Barwood and director Matthew Robbins is a science fiction tale set in the year 2215 A.D. telling of the conflicts between the survivors who populate a devastated Earth...

**THE ESCAPE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN** is a Walt Disney Production for release by Buena-Vista to be directed by John Hough, who directed Richard Matheson's **THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE** last year. The screenplay by Robert Malcolm Young, based on a book by Alexander Key, is the story of two young orphans with supernatural powers. The film began lensing April 18 and stars Eddie Albert, Ray Milland and Donald Pleasence...

**THE GHOUL** is a Tyburn Film Production shot at England's Pinewood studios by producer Kevin Francis and directed by his brother, Freddie Francis, well-known for his work on numerous British horror films. The film stars Peter Cushing as a mysterious Dr. Lawrence who keeps a "thing" locked up in his house at Land's End that eats human flesh and dispatches several of the main characters before the film's conclusion. The screenplay, written by Hammer veteran John Elder, is set in the '20s and maintains a quaint period flavor that enhances the believability of the horror theme. Makeup artist Roy Ashton has created the ghastly features of the ghoul played by Don Henderson. The film also features Veronica Carlson, and is the first of several horror film projects to be filmed by the Tyburn company. No U.S. release has been set...

**THE KIRLIAN FORCE** began lensing May 20 in Los Angeles for independent Mars Productions. The original

Scenes from the forthcoming 20th Century-Fox release **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**, Mel Brook's satire of the classic Universal horror films of the '30s and '40s. Gene Wilder stars as Baron Frederick Frankenstein and makeup artist Bill Tuttle has transformed Peter Boyle into a Karloff look-alike as the Frankenstein monster. Brooks has even gone so far as to film in black-and-white to sustain the atmosphere and feeling of the old horror classics. Michael Gruskoff has produced the film which is written by Brooks and star Gene Wilder. Gruskoff produced Douglas Trumbull's **SILENT RUNNING** and the as yet unreleased **IDAHO TRANSFER**. Brook's latest film is **BLAZING SADDLES**, a western film satire.

script by director Ray Danton and Greydon Clark deals with the subject of Kirlian photography, a process developed by a Russian scientist that records photographically the unique energy force or aura that surrounds all living things, a topic somewhat popularized by film director William Friedkin during his press junkets on behalf of **THE EXORCIST**. The plot deals with a young man who uses his knowledge of psychic phenomena and parapsychology to combat a secret society that is out to get him. The films stars Julie Adams, Paul Burke, Neville Brand and Whit Bissell...

**THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT** began filming February 27 at England's Shepperton Studios for Amicus Pictures and AIP release. The film is being described as one of the largest scale productions to be filmed in England in several years. The film stars Doug McClure and British actor John McEnery and is based on the novel of the same name by Edgar Rice Burroughs telling of the exploits of a handful of survivors from a merchant ship torpedoed and sunk in the Atlantic during World War I, who drift to an unknown land in the Antarctic where time has stood still for millions of years, a land populated by primeval men and prehistoric monsters. The film is being directed by Kevin Connor from a screenplay by Michael Moorcock and Jim Cawthorne...

**MAGNA 1—BEYOND THE BARRIER REEF** is an original science fiction adventure story by Jack DeWitt to be produced independently by Sandy Howard Productions and released by 20th Century-Fox. Howard produced **THE NEPTUNE FACTOR** for Fox last year, a cheap and unimaginative underwater story promoted as a science fiction odyssey...

**MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN** began filming April 20 in Hong Kong and Thailand for producers Albert Broccoli and Harry Saltzman. This ninth in the James Bond series returns Roger Moore to the Bond role for a second time, and also stars Britt Ekland as Mary Goodnight and Christopher Lee. Guy Hamilton directs from Richard Maibaum's script, both veteran contributors to past Bond outings...

**THE REINCARNATION OF PETER PROUD** began filming April 24 in Los Angeles and on New England locations for Bing Crosby Productions. The screenplay by Max Ehrlich is based on a forthcoming novel and is directed by J. Lee Thompson, responsible for the highly effective British supernatural thriller **EYE OF THE DEVIL** (1967). The film stars Michael Sarrazin, Jennifer O'Neill and Margot Kidder...

**THE STEPFORD WIVES** based on the novel by Ira Levin, author of **ROSEMARY'S BABY**, began filming on location in Connecticut and New York May 20 for Columbia Pictures release. The film, concerning the bizarre effects that automation has on the women of a quiet suburban community, is being directed by Bryan Forbes from a screenplay by William Goldman. Owen Roizman, the exceptional cinematographer who photographed **THE EXORCIST**, is working as the film's director of photography. The Palomar production features Katherine Ross and Patrick O'Neal...

**TEN LITTLE INDIANS** is a forthcoming film from director Peter Collinson (**FRIGHT**), starring James Mason, Oliver Reed and Elke Sommer, to be filmed in Tehran, marking the third film version of the successful Agatha Christie mystery, filmed previously in 1965 (George Pollock) and 1945 (Rene Clair)...





# LETTERS

The latest issue (Vol 3 No 1) offers the most comprehensive and intelligent review of Christopher Lee's career that I've read anywhere. The article would perhaps have been more definitive if authors Pitts and Parish had taken the trouble to credit their source material. Unless I'm mistaken, some of the quotes in the article were taken from my Christopher Lee interview which appeared in *Castle of Frankenstein* magazine.

One inaccuracy which requires correction: CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR was not shot in Spain but on location at Grynmside Manor, an Elizabethan house just outside of London where CRY OF THE BANSHEE was also filmed. And whilst agreeing that the film is a terrible waste of talent (Lee, Barbara Steele, Boris Karloff, Michael Gough, etc.) I don't think it can be called "an eight day quickie." I doubt whether it took any less than four weeks to shoot as it was considered to be one of AIP's most ambitious European projects at the time. Incidentally, an earlier draft of the script appears to have been based on H. P. Lovecraft's story "Dreams in the Witch-House."

MICHEL PARRY  
19 Bristol Gardens, London W9 UK

Jack Guerreiro's letter in Vol 3 No 2 voices a common complaint about overly antagonistic critics: mainly, what are you doing commenting on motion pictures when you haven't done a film at least as good as the ones you're paning. It's a good question, one might ask Mr. Guerreiro what he's doing commenting on movie reviews if he can't do a few at least as good as the ones he mentions. Obviously if one needed to be an expert at a field before he could comment upon it then the field would be an empty one indeed. Reviewers generally know a little more about movies than the man off the street and have the ability to put their feelings into a string of coherent words that enhance a viewer's ideas about a picture. Most of your reviewers are able to do just that.

MARK VERHEIDEN  
3245 SW 185th Ave, Aloha OR 97005

I was happy to see attention called to the fine film *I MARRIED A MONSTER FROM OUTER SPACE* (Vol 3 No 2). However, David Hogan failed to describe accurately one of the strongest points of the film—sympathy for the aliens. They are by no means uniformly pictured as "distant, aloof, clever and ruthless." Nor are they really "monsters." It is to the great credit of Fowler and Vettes that they play upon the audience's own ethnocentric fears while never endorsing them. The aliens are "monsters" to us, but we are plenty strange to them as the film makes clear repeatedly. These aliens are not "pod-people," but individuals with differing viewpoints. They are the survivors of a dying, but extremely advanced culture. It must not have seemed unwarranted to them to try to use a backward species on a primitive planet to save their great civilization. It is only too late that they realize that the races are too different, both biologically and psychologically, for their desperate attempt at survival to succeed. Gradually, "Bill Farrell" begins to understand

the strange human society into which he has come. He does not ruthlessly destroy Marge when she becomes a threat; he lets her live. His apparent affection for her ultimately destroys him. In the end, he tells her forlornly that he was just beginning to understand human beings. She can make no reply. She cannot begin to understand the aliens. The human beings respond simply by killing all the aliens within their reach.

The strength of the film is just this: It transforms the commonplace invasion theme into a mature treatment of the clash of mutually alien cultures. No simple judgements are permitted. The humans are just as ruthless when endangered as the "monsters." We can understand the fear of the villagers, but only an insensitive viewer can watch the destruction of the aliens and not feel a sense of regret. Probably their culture is now doomed as well. One is left with the hope that when human beings actually encounter aliens the outcome will be less tragic. The history of human societies in conflict does not give us much support for this hope, unless the aliens are vastly superior as in 2001. It is in raising these issues, not as an early example of women's lib, that the true merit of *I MARRIED A MONSTER FROM OUTER SPACE* is to be found.

ALAN G. HILL  
423 W 120th St #21, New York NY 10027

In your latest issue (Vol 3 No 2) I was sorry to find your reviewer sucked in by *THE EXORCIST*. The film is a medium-grade shocker with almost nil horror value despite its incredible editing (sound and visual) and special effects. When reviewer Harry Ringel exclaims "THE EXORCIST is the most frightening horror film ever made," (assuming he wrote the photo captions) I can only suspect that at the time the review was written he was possessed—by the Warner Bros publicity department. There wasn't a moment in the film when I was scared, but there were plenty when I was shocked, jolted and revolted. There is a difference between shock and horror/fear.

The tone of the story itself was mangled by director Friedkin's budgeon approach. The movie lurches from climax to climax without any attempt at subtlety in plot structure and rhythm.

In Friedkin's hands nearly the entire tone of the book and the ending was either lost or changed. In the movie, the demon's reason for possessing Regan was to get the young priest—which it succeeded in doing. It triumphed. In the book it was to have the chance to do battle with the old priest (Max von Sydow) again. In the end the priests win. There are more subtle changes through and through the film too numerous to list. One omission was quite severe, however, as it was the most entertaining part of the book. Friedkin cut the long conversations between the young priest and the demon. The wit and intelligence of the demon in these talks made him more than a funny voice with raw vocabulary. He acquired a special personality and became more awesome to work against because of his mind and powers. Ringel states "There might be a Devil at work in the book, there is one loose in the movie." He unfortunately missed the point. You knew there was a demon inside Regan. What was intriguing was the Priest's problem of proving it when the devil would read his mind and thwart each attempt with sardonic glee until it was ready to do battle with the older priest. And in what ways are this demon's depths of evil depicted?—masturbation and cursing! This return to Puritan morality (read: morosity) is more disgusting than any of the film's special effects.

WILLIAM G. STOUT  
1437 N Poinsettia Pl #H, Hollywood CA

I can't agree with Dale Winogura's short notice on *NIGHT WATCH* (Vol 3 No 2). I did find it to be fun. Super fun in fact. And though one does suspect the ultimate outcome early on in the film, director Brian Hutton does his best to create doubt in the viewer's mind with his sudden loud and showy nightmare sequences and several other over-done scenes of mind-diverting proportion. But the foremost diversion, I think, is Miss Taylor herself. Eyes darting, gowns swirling, she is in constant motion throughout most of the film and hysterically so at that. She is credible and convincing and so tricks us further into doubt as she verges on camp but never quite crosses over as she chews the scenery to shreds. And finally these elements of the extreme all blend together to form a moody style; a lushness that is not unlike the handsome visual appearance of the film itself. Fun? Gleefully so!

I would like to thank Mr. Winogura, however, for his contributions to the letters section of the *L.A. Sunday Times*. Most recently he wrote a fine and intelligent defense of *THE EXORCIST* in rebuttal to the exaggerated misconceptions of an unenlightened fool. Bravo, Mr. Winogura! Well done.

JIM YORK  
1435 S Monterey St, Alhambra CA 91801

SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
CFQ LETTERS  
P O Box 270, Oak Park IL 60303

## DS • CLASSIFIED ADS • CLASSIFIED A

Classified ads are \$1 per column line, payable in advance. A column line is 106 points or approximately 35 type-written characters.

**SOLID HYDROCAL BUST OF KARLOFF as FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER:** 3/4 life-size, finished in bronze. The bust is an exact likeness of Karloff in the role, an artistic production designed for the serious collector. Send check for \$20 (plus \$4.50 for postage and special handling) to the sculptor **RICHARD MASLOSKI**, 24 Lannis Avenue, Newburgh NY 12550. If you desire to see the bust before purchase, send SASE and 25¢ for photo.

Filmmaker needs photos and film of director Stanley Kubrick for biographic documentary. Material must show Kubrick himself. Write: **A.C.E. FILMS**, 1263 65th St, Brooklyn NY 11219.

**BIZARRE.** The connoisseur's magazine of the grotesque. All about bizarre films. #3 features a full-color cover-story on "FRANKENSTEIN: THE TRUE STORY" plus reviews of 50 other films including "THE EXORCIST." 2nd Annual Bizarre Awards and much more. \$2.25. **BIZARRE #1 & 2** at \$2.25 each. Sam L. Irvin, Jr., 87 Forest Road, Asheville NC 28803.

Wanted: **VINCENT PRICE!** Serious fan wishes to enlarge personal collection of Price memorabilia—original material or copies. Donna L. Astin, 22 Bryant Ln, Fairhaven MA 02719

**BLACK ORACLE #7** is now available and features coverage on the *STAR TREK* stage play "One Cube Or Two?", reviews of *LOST HORIZON* and the Kirk Douglas version of *DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*, "A Chat With Vincent Price," current movie and book reviews, poetry, artwork and many more items of interest. Send 45¢ for the current issue or \$1.25 for a 3 issue subscription to **George Stover**, P. O. Box 10005, Baltimore MD 21204

## CFQ BOOKSHOP



**Reference Guide to Fantastic Films** compiled by Walt Lee is a three volume set listing cast and credit information for all horror, fantasy and science fiction films, giving a brief description of why the entry belongs in the genre and citing bibliographic sources of further information. Each volume is paperback, size 8.5x11, approximately 200 pages, and illustrated with photographs. Vol 1: A-F, Vol 2: G-O, Vol 3: P-Z. A must.



**FXRH** stands for Special Visual Effects created by Ray Harryhausen, a 92 page booklet consisting of nothing but interesting photos and information about the films of Ray Harryhausen, including many full color photographs from *THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*, and an interview with the man himself. Size 8.5x11, wrap-around binding. Worth having for the hundreds of behind the scenes production shots and frame blowups!

CFQ BOOKSHOP  
P. O. Box 270, Oak Park, IL 60303

I have enclosed a check or money order for the following items, and would like to receive your full catalog of books, posters and cinema memorabilia.

### Reference Guide to Fantastic Films

- ( ) copies Vol 1, \$9.50@
- ( ) copies Vol 2, \$9.95@
- ( ) copies Vol 3, \$9.95@
- ( ) copies FXRH, \$5.00@

Name .....  
Address .....  
City ..... State ..... Zip Code .....





**FANTASTIC PLANET**